



Economic Commission for Africa
Statistical Commission for Africa
Sixth meeting
Addis Ababa, 1–4 October 2018

Report of the sixth meeting of the Statistical Commission for Africa

I. Introduction

1. The sixth meeting of the Statistical Commission for Africa was held in Addis Ababa from 1 to 4 October 2018 under the theme “Enhancing the capacity of national statistical systems to support policies for Africa’s economic diversification and industrialization”. The theme was chosen to highlight the role of statistics in responding to the need for diversification and industrialization in the context of the Sustainable Development Goals, Agenda 2063 and more specifically, the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCTA).

2. The meeting was preceded by the thirteenth Africa Symposium on Statistical Development, held on 1 and 2 October 2018, and the eighth Forum on African Statistical Development, held on 2 October 2018. The fourth session of the Regional Committee of the United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Africa was held as a back-to-back event with the Statistical Commission, in addition to a number of side events.

II. Attendance

Member States

3. The sixth meeting was attended by delegates from the following 48 member States: Angola; Benin; Botswana; Burkina Faso; Burundi; Cameroon; Cabo Verde; Central African Republic; Chad; Comoros; Congo; Democratic Republic of the Congo; Djibouti; Egypt; Equatorial Guinea; Eswatini; Ethiopia; Gabon; Gambia; Ghana; Guinea-Bissau; Kenya; Lesotho; Liberia; Libya; Madagascar; Malawi; Mali; Morocco; Mozambique; Namibia; Niger; Nigeria; Rwanda; Sao Tome and Principe; Senegal; Seychelles; Sierra Leone, Somalia; South Africa; South Sudan; Sudan; Togo; Tunisia; Uganda; United Republic of Tanzania; Zambia; and Zimbabwe.

Observers

4. The meeting was attended by observers from the following non-African State, international, regional, subregional and national organizations and institutions:

(a) Non-African State: United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland;

* Reissued for technical reasons on 30 November 2020.



(b) International, regional and subregional organizations and institutions: African Development Bank (AfDB); African Union Commission; Airbus Defence and Space; Arab Maghreb Union; Central African Economic and Monetary Community; Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa; Economic and Statistical Observatory for Sub-Saharan Africa; Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data; IPUMS-International; Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development; Partnership in Statistics for Development in the Twenty-first Century (PARIS21), Pan-African Institute for Evidence; Southern African Development Community; University of Copenhagen, and World Bank;

(c) Training Institutions: Eastern Africa Statistical Training Centre; Institut de formation et de recherche démographiques (IFORD); National Higher School of Applied Statistics and Economics; and SSP-Makerere University;

(d) Agencies of the United Nations system: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations; Institute for Statistics-United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization; Statistics Division; and the United Nations Population Fund;

(e) Others: international statistics consultants and other prominent persons.

III. Election of the Bureau and adoption of the agenda [agenda item 2]

5. Participants approved the proposed Bureau of the meeting:

Chair: United Republic of Tanzania

First Vice Chair: Kenya

Second Vice Chair: Tunisia

First Rapporteur: Zambia

Second Rapporteur: Senegal

6. The following agenda was adopted by the delegates:

1. Opening of the meeting.
2. Election of the Bureau and adoption of the agenda and programme of work.
3. New strategic areas for the Economic Commission for Africa and statutory reports.
4. Report on side events.
5. Outcomes of the forty-ninth session of the United Nations Statistical Commission.
6. Integration of statistics and geospatial information.
7. Partners Statistical Capacity Building Programmes.
8. Preparation of the fiftieth session of the United Nations Statistical Commission.
9. Consideration of main conclusions and recommendations.
10. Closing of the meeting.

IV. Account of proceedings

Opening of the meeting [agenda item 1]

7. The meeting was officially opened by the President of the Federal Republic Democratic of Ethiopia, Mulatu Teshome. After welcoming the audience on behalf of the people and the Government, Mr. Teshome stressed the importance of the themes of the Statistical Commission and the Symposium with respect to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Agenda 2063. He underlined the significant role of population and housing Censuses in monitoring the two agendas and called upon countries to participate in the 2020 round of the censuses. He stressed that countries should align the Sustainable Development Goals with national development plans and integrate geographic information system data into the national statistical system.

8. Opening remarks were delivered by the Deputy Executive Secretary and Chief Economist of ECA, Abdalla Hamdok. He emphasized the need to enhance the capacity of national statistical systems to further align them with the growing demand for statistics in support of the national, regional and global development agendas and highlighted the support provided by ECA to member States through such activities as trainings, workshops and advisory missions on key statistical domains. He concluded his remarks by reiterating the commitment of ECA to continue to support statistical development throughout Africa.

9. Opening remarks were delivered by the Chairperson of the Africa Symposium on Statistical Development, Risenga Maluleke (Statistician General, South Africa). He announced that the Symposium was now a legacy and stressed the need for participants to pause and ask themselves how the Africa Symposium on Statistical Development could be made sustainable. He also expressed his appreciation for the work of his predecessor, Pali Lehohla, who had chaired the Symposium for approximately a decade and contributed immensely to enhancing statistical development in Africa. He concluded stressing the importance of the Symposium in statistical development, especially in enhancing population and housing censuses and vital statistics.

10. Opening remarks were delivered by Gregory Scott, on behalf of the Director of the Statistics Division, who noted the important contribution of the joint effort involving the Statistics Division and ECA/African Centre for Statistics in supporting African countries in their efforts to strengthen national statistical capacities and highlighted political leadership, national ownership and additional resources as requirements for a successful statistical transformation. In his concluding remarks, he urged those that work on data and statistics to understand the sense of urgency of the 2030 Agenda, and to redouble their efforts to meet the data requirements.

11. Opening remarks were delivered by the Director of Statistics Department of the AfDB, Charles Lufumpa, who pointed out a major challenge, the lack of political will in some countries to allocate adequate resources to ensure the regularity of a quality national account over time. To ensure that no one is left behind, he called on countries to use national statistical systems to improve administrative data by, for example, investing in civil registration and vital statistics, and disaggregating indicators. In addition, he called for further analysis of census data in order to generate disaggregated data pertaining to the Sustainable Development Goals. He concluded his remarks by ensuring that AfDB would remain committed to statistical development in Africa, working together with, among others, the African Union Commission and ECA.

Keynote address

12. The keynote address was delivered by Vincent F. Hendricks, Professor of Formal Philosophy at the University of Copenhagen, Denmark, on the theme of the Statistical Commission. He pointed out that in the era of fake news and populist politicians, statisticians should be aware of the threat to evidence-

based policymaking. Statisticians needed to put more effort in explaining and selling their work to ensure that their output helped African Governments make informed policies that could change communities and democracies for the better. Experts needed to do more to push their Governments to fund statistical development. At the end of the address, Mr. Hendricks launched his new book, *Reality Lost*, which was co-authored by Mads Vestergaard.

New strategic areas for the Economic Commission for Africa and statutory reports [agenda item 3]

Documents:

E/ECA/STATCOM/6/2; E/ECA/STATCOM/6/3; E/ECA/STATCOM/6/5;
E/ECA/STATCOM/6/6; E/ECA/STATCOM/6/7; E/ECA/STATCOM/6/10.

New strategic areas and statistical programme

13. A representative of ECA gave an overview presentation on the revised ECA mandate, the changing dynamics within the institution and its vision, objectives, strategic directions and focus areas. In the presentation, the vision of the African Centre for Statistics, transforming Africa through credible data and statistics, was highlighted. ECA explained the underlying structure of the Centre, its work areas and the new four-year Comprehensive Programme of Work, its components and related implementation arrangements to support statistics in Africa.

14. Discussion points touched predominantly on the issue of coordination during the implementation of the programme of work; the Centre's capacity to carry out the programme of work, and its content. The Statistical Commission made recommendations and broadly endorsed the proposed programme of work of the African Centre for Statistics.

Statutory reports

15. A representative of ECA introduced five statutory reports highlighting the work accomplished and points for discussion and decision by the Statistical Commission. The reports focused on the following thematic areas:

- (a) Statistical capacity development in Africa;
- (b) Regional report on Sustainable Development Goal indicators;
- (c) Population and housing censuses;
- (d) Civil registration and vital statistics;
- (e) 2008 System of National Accounts.

Report on statistical capacity development in Africa

16. The focus of the report was on the ongoing capacity development in the area of statistics at the national, subregional and continental levels in Africa as part of efforts to promote sustainable development. It was recommended that the Statistical Commission consider the guidance and recommendations provided in the report.

Regional report on indicators of the Sustainable Development Goals

17. The participants were informed about the work conducted by ECA on the integrated regional indicator framework and the handbook on that framework. The Statistical Commission was invited to consider the guidance and recommendations provided in the report.

Report on population and housing censuses

18. The presentation included highlights of the activities carried out to prepare for the 2020 census-taking in Africa, covering mostly the work conducted by ECA and partners. It was recommended that the Statistical Commission consider the guidance and recommendations provided in the report.

Report on civil registration and vital statistics

19. Participants were informed about progress in the implementation of the Africa Programme on Accelerated Improvement of Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Systems and the challenges, which mainly involved funding at regional and national levels and having the capacity to monitor the performance of their civil registration systems on a regular basis. The Statistical Commission was invited to provide further guidance on addressing those challenges.

Statutory document on the 2008 System of National Accounts

20. The report provided an update and information on the progress related to the implementation of the 2008 System of National Accounts in Africa during the period since the previous session of the Statistical Commission. The Commission was invited to consider the guidance and recommendations provided in the report.

21. Delegates expressed their appreciation for the work carried out by ECA related to statistical capacity development, the Sustainable Development Goals, population and housing censuses, civil registration and vital statistics and gross domestic product rebasing, and recommended ECA to facilitate experience-sharing among countries. Several country delegations requested that the data in the report pertaining to the implementation of the 2008 System of National Accounts be amended. The Statistical Commission made recommendations on each area and endorsed all statutory reports, pending the requested amendments.

External review of the intergovernmental structure of the Economic Commission for Africa and the Statistical Committee

22. The Conference of Finance and Planning Ministers requested ECA to conduct a review of the intergovernmental structure of ECA with the objective to assess the effectiveness and efficiency of ECA and its subsidiary organs. The findings of the review would be used to inform member States and the secretariat on modalities for improving engagement of the secretariat with ECA, and on the optimal configuration of its subsidiary organs to be aligned with its new strategic priorities. The Statistical Commission was the first organ to be assessed. Delegates were requested to complete a questionnaire and participate in interviews with the independent consultant.

Report on side events [agenda item 4]

23. The following reports were received:

- (a) Thirteenth African Symposium on Statistical Development;
- (b) Eighth meeting of the Forum on African Statistical Development;
- (c) Fourth meeting of the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management in Africa;
- (d) Meeting of the African Group on statistical training and human resources;
- (e) Training in multidimensional poverty and its use in policy for transparency, engagement, accountability, planning, implementation, budgeting and especially for catalysing global private sector resources;
- (f) Leadership training sessions;
- (g) Harnessing Earth observations: satellite data to support sustainable development in Africa.

24. The Statistical Commission discussed and endorsed these reports and related recommendations.

Outcomes of the forty-ninth session of the United Nations Statistical Commission [agenda item 5]

25. The following outcomes were presented to the Statistical Commission:

- (a) Global Indicator Framework Goals and Targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (United Republic of Tanzania);
- (b) Coordination and capacity-building for statistics for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (Angola);
- (c) Open data (Tunisia);
- (d) Household survey (Nigeria);
- (e) Big data for official statistics (Rwanda);
- (f) Environmental and economic accounting (Kenya);
- (g) Statistics for economies based on natural resources (Gabon);
- (h) Agriculture and rural statistics (Uganda);
- (i) Work and employment statistics (Zambia).

26. The representative of the Statistical Commission commended the efforts and contributions made by African countries on those topics. It further expressed views, guidance and shared experiences on the implementation of activities of the global statistical agenda and formulated recommendations.

Integration of statistics and geospatial information [agenda item 6]**Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Africa**

27. The Chair of the United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Africa acknowledged the effort made on the continent to link geography with statistics. The African statistical spatial framework being developed would ensure effective collaboration between the statistical community and the geospatial community in building their respective infrastructures.

28. Presentations were also given by partners and industry providers (Digital Globe, Airbus Defence and Space Deimos Imaging and Environmental Systems Research Institute), on Earth observation data, which demonstrated the visible benefits that could be accomplished through the adoption and sound application of the geographical information system, remote sensing and other geospatial solutions, tools and techniques in the creation, analysis and presentation of the foundational data required for the Sustainable Development Goals.

29. The representative of the Statistical Commission welcomed and discussed the initiatives and their positive impact on statistical production and gave further guidance and recommendations, mainly on the institutional framework.

Partners' statistical capacity-building programmes [agenda item 7]

30. The statistical capacity-building programmes of partners were presented to the Statistical Commission. Participants gave comments and further guidance. The following presentations were given by the partners:

- (a) Purchasing power parities and international comparisons: powering the African Free Trade Area (AfDB) and the International Comparison Programme (World Bank);
- (b) Status of real sector macroeconomic statistics in Africa and around the world (International Monetary Fund);

- (c) Statistics Division Capacity-Building Initiatives focusing on ECA countries (Statistics Division);
- (d) Data science for official statistics (Office of National Statistics-United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland);
- (e) African Union Commission statistical activities;
- (f) African Development Bank statistical capacity-building (AfDB);
- (g) Facilitating statistical capacity-building programmes (Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data);
- (h) International total official support for sustainable development task force (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development).

31. The representative of the Statistical Commission acknowledged the partners' statistical capacity-building programmes and provided recommendations, including on synergies and coordination of those programmes, aimed at benefiting national statistical systems.

Preparation of the fiftieth session of the United Nations Statistical Commission [agenda item 8]

32. A representative of ECA presented the process for the preparation of African contributions to the fiftieth session of the Statistical Commission, to be held in New York from 5 to 8 March 2019. The Commission was invited to provide comments and guidance for the preparation of the common African position.

Consideration of main conclusions and recommendations [agenda item 9]

33. Conclusions and recommendations were presented by the representative of Zambia, the first rapporteur of the Bureau of the Statistical Commission, and adopted with few amendments. ECA was requested to finalize the document. The final document of conclusions and recommendations was annexed to the present report.

Date and venue of the seventh session of the Statistical Commission

34. The Statistical Commission requested ECA to make the necessary arrangements for the convening of the seventh meeting of the Statistical Commission for Africa, in Addis Ababa in October 2020.

V. Closing of the meeting [agenda item 10]

35. The meeting was closed by the Chair of the Statistical Commission after closing remarks from the Director of the African Centre for Statistics on behalf of the Deputy Executive Secretary of ECA.

Annex

Conclusions and recommendations of the sixth meeting of the Statistical Commission for Africa

Introduction

The sixth meeting of the Statistical Commission for Africa was held in Addis Ababa from 1 to 4 October 2018 under the theme “Enhancing the capacity of national statistical systems to support policies for Africa’s economic diversification and industrialization”.

Preamble

On the sixth meeting of the Statistical Commission for Africa

1. *Acknowledging* that the theme of the meeting had been chosen to highlight the role of the national statistical system, as the backbone of the transformative agenda for Africa, in supporting economic diversification and industrialization policies and promoting the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Agenda 2063 of the African Union;
2. *Also acknowledging* the request by the keynote speaker for African statisticians to take ownership of their data and use it for the prosperity of the continent, and to do more to explain and sell their work in order to ensure that their product helps African Governments to make informed policies that can change communities and democracies for the better;
3. *Considering* the new strategic framework of ECA and its new strategic areas and statistical programme;
4. *Also considering* the statutory reports by ECA on: statistical capacity development in Africa; the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; population and housing censuses; civil registration and vital statistics; and the 2008 System of National Accounts;
5. *Taking note* of the reports and recommendations of the thirteenth African Symposium on Statistical Development, the eighth meeting of the Forum on African Statistical Development, and the fourth meeting of the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Africa;
6. *Also taking note* of the reports and recommendations of the following side events: a meeting of the African Group on human resources and statistical training; a course on training in multidimensional poverty; a leadership training course; and a presentation on harnessing Earth observations – satellite data to support sustainable development in Africa;
7. *Acknowledging* the importance of agricultural statistics in measuring African economies;
8. *Considering* the outcomes of the forty-ninth session of the United Nations Statistical Commission and African perspectives on key areas of the global statistical agenda;
9. *Also considering* the integration of statistics into geospatial information and how next-generation smart censuses, supported by fresh imagery base maps and geospatial data, can be used to tackle statistical challenges and facilitate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;
10. *Acknowledging* that geospatial information science and technology and related disciplines, which are used in numerous applications and services to foster industrial, social and economic development, offer radically different

ways to produce and use information with a view to promoting economic and community development;

11. *Noting* that in-depth knowledge of the links among individuals, economic activities and geographic locations can result in a deeper understanding of key social, economic and environmental issues than is possible through an assessment of socioeconomic data alone, and can, therefore, facilitate the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

12. *Noting* the progress achieved at the global and continental levels towards the development of a global statistical and geospatial framework;

13. *Having taken note* of and exchanged views on statistical capacity-building programmes in support of the African statistical system;

14. *Considering* preparations for the fiftieth session of the United Nations Statistical Commission;

15. *Having taken note* of the ongoing comprehensive review of the intergovernmental structures of ECA and, in that context, the completed questionnaire seeking the views of the members of the Statistical Commission for Africa;

General

Statistical Commission for Africa

16. **Urges** member States to allocate 0.15 per cent of their national budget in line with the decision of the African Union Heads of State and Government Summit held in January 2018, to support the production, dissemination and use of statistics for the implementation of national development plans, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Agenda 2063;

17. **Calls upon** member States to engage in creative and innovative ways to overcome some of the key challenges facing national statistics offices in order to achieve the objective of establishing a statistical system that functions well;

18. **Urges** development partners to enhance the capacity of national statistical systems to continue to align with the growing demand for statistics in support of development agendas that are evolving at the national, regional and global levels;

19. **Encourages** member States to mainstream geospatial information technologies as a basic framework for supporting statistical production and the dissemination of statistical data;

20. **Urges** stakeholders on statistical development in Africa to work together to meet the increasing demand for data for all development agendas;

21. **Calls upon** national statistics offices to prioritize the use and improve the quality of administrative data, including by investing in civil registration and vital statistics systems, and in disaggregating indicators for monitoring basic human rights, in order to redress inequality;

On enhancing the capacity of national statistical systems to support policies supporting economic diversification and industrialization in Africa

22. **Calls upon** member States to collaborate in creative and innovative ways and create synergies across data ecosystems and forge partnerships among relevant stakeholders in order to overcome key challenges impeding the work of national statistics offices with a view to establishing an effective and efficient statistical system;

23. **Underscores** that effective political leadership, national ownership and adequate resources are needed to ensure the success of statistical transformation initiatives;

On new strategic areas and statutory issues of the Economic Commission for Africa**New strategic areas and the statistical programme**

24. **Takes note** of new strategic areas of ECA, **endorses** its statistical programme and **urges** ECA to continue its efforts in support of statistical capacity-building by member States, in close cooperation with the African Union Commission, the African Development Bank and the African Capacity-Building Foundation;

Statutory document on statistical capacity development in Africa

25. **Takes note of** ongoing capacity development in the area of statistics at the national, subregional and continental levels in Africa, as part of efforts to promote sustainable development;

26. **Implores** African statisticians to take responsibility for ensuring that the public is well-informed and protects democracy in the era of attention economics propelled by the availability of technology, “fake news” and finance;

27. **Calls upon** member States countries to mainstream national strategies for the development of statistics into national development plans and budgeting processes, and underscores that doing so facilitates efforts to monitor and evaluate the development of such national plans would be facilitated;

28. **Also calls upon** member States to give high priority to statistics by allocating adequate financial resources for the production and use of statistics, and to establish national funds for statistics, as recommended in the African Charter on Statistics;

29. **Further calls upon** member States to review their legislation on statistics and to align that legislation with the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics and the African Charter on Statistics and to ensure the effective coordination of all actors involved in national statistical systems;

30. **Calls upon** the regional economic communities to strengthen their capacities in the area of statistics and to strengthen coordination among their members of the national statistical system and harmonize statistics production mechanisms;

31. **Calls upon** development partners to scale up their support to the African statistics system with a view to facilitating the implementation of the Strategy for the Harmonization of Statistics in Africa;

Regional report on indicators of the Sustainable Development Goals

32. **Takes note of** the work conducted by ECA on the integrated regional indicator framework and the handbook on that framework;

33. **Requests** countries to increase the availability of data relevant to the indicators of the Sustainable Development Goals and integrated regional indicators;

34. **Endorses** the conclusions and recommendations of the report on the implementation of the African Programme on Gender Statistics, contained in the annex of the present report, on indicators of the Sustainable Development Goals;

Statutory document on population and housing censuses

35. **Urges** member States to conduct the 2020 Round of Population and Housing Censuses in Africa in order to support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Agenda 2063;

36. **Encourages** member States to consider emerging issues relating to census-taking activities in Africa, including the use of dwelling frames and building footprints in census cartography, the use of handheld devices, the use of spatial data collected during census cartography activities and modifications to census chronograms following the introduction of mobile devices;

37. **Calls upon** African countries to mobilize resources for census-taking activities and development partners to support the efforts of member States;

Statutory report on civil registration and vital statistics

38. **Encourages** member States to strengthen civil registration and vital statistics systems to support inter-censal population estimates and projections through the regular and continuous collection of vital statistics compiled from civil registration systems on birth and death, which are the two key components of population change;

39. **Encourages** member States to establish a committee of registrars general for an intergovernmental forum in pursuit of the decision handed down by the African Ministers responsible for Civil Registration. The committee will be tasked with deliberating on development issues relating to civil registration. It will work with the secretariat of the Africa Programme on Accelerated Improvement of Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Systems and the statistical community through the Statistical Commission for Africa and Committee of Directors General of National Statistical Offices to sustain the momentum that has been achieved and help to accelerate progress in strengthening registration and vital statistics systems;

40. **Encourages** member States to strengthen coordination between civil registration offices and national statistics offices to improve the following: the coverage and completeness of the registration of vital events; the quality of data on vital records; and the production of annual vital statistics reports by member States;

Statutory document on the 2008 System of National Accounts

41. **Acknowledges** the progress that member States have made on rebasing the gross domestic product and **urges** them to comply with the international recommendation that the gross domestic product be rebased every five years;

42. **Takes note of** the key factors that hindered member States from compiling supply-use tables in accordance with the 2008 System of National Accounts and **urges** member States to meet those challenges and to update supply-use tables more frequently;

43. **Urges** member States to make use of environmental accounts when drawing up policies on sustainable natural resource management and the environment;

44. **Takes note of** the areas covered by economic indicators of the Sustainable Development Goals, and **calls upon** stakeholders to adopt an integrated economic statistics approach with a view to making efficient and effective use of all relevant data sources when developing those indicators;

45. **Urges** member States to fully implement the 2008 System of National Accounts;

On side events

Thirteenth African Symposium on Statistical Development

46. **Endorses** the report and recommendations of the thirteenth African Symposium on Statistical Development and urges member States to update their population censuses and economic statistics systems;

47. **Calls upon** member States, supported by pan-African institutions, to sustain the African Symposium on Statistical Development vis-à-vis its management and in particular its funding model and, further, **welcomes** the establishment of a committee comprising select member States (Equatorial Guinea, Morocco, Rwanda, Senegal and South Africa) and pan-African institutions (Economic Commission for Africa, African Development Bank and African Union Commission) for that purpose;

Eighth meeting of the Forum on African Statistical Development

48. **Endorses** the report and recommendations of the eighth meeting of the Forum on African Statistical Development and **urges** member States to develop innovative solutions to improve the quality and credibility of data;

Fourth meeting of the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management in Africa

49. **Endorses** the conclusions and recommendations of the fourth meeting of the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management in Africa and **accepts** the request to submit those recommendations to the Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development for endorsement;

Side events

50. **Endorses** the reports and recommendations of the following side events:

(a) Meeting of the African Group on statistical training and human resources;

(b) Training in multidimensional poverty and its use in policy for transparency, engagement, accountability, planning, implementation, budgeting and especially for catalysing global private sector resources;

(c) Leadership training sessions;

(d) Harnessing Earth observations: satellite data to support sustainable development in Africa;

51. **Urges** member States to conduct a census of agriculture at least once during the 2016–2025 round of agricultural censuses and a programme of regular integrated surveys in the intercensal period;

Outcomes of the forty-ninth session of the United Nations Statistical Commission

52. **Takes note of** the efforts and contributions of representatives of African countries to the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goals Indicators and the High-level Group for Partnership, Coordination and Capacity-Building for statistics for the 2030 Agenda and requested all countries to support those efforts and contributions;

53. **Also takes note of** African perspectives on key areas of the global statistical agenda emanating from the forty-ninth session of the United Nations Statistical Commission and **encourages** all member States to implement activities relating to the global statistical agenda;

54. **Calls upon** member States, supported by pan-African institutions, to establish an African group to reflect on big data in official statistics;

Integration of statistics and geospatial information

55. **Takes note** that in order to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and to monitor its progress effectively, decision makers must recognize that in-depth knowledge of links among people, economic activities and geographic locations can promote a deeper understanding of key social, economic and environmental issues than is possible through an assessment of socioeconomic data alone;

56. **Recommends** that the Regional Committee of the United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Africa be established as an overarching governance framework in the field of geospatial information management, science and technology, in order to ensure that it has the capacity to adapt policies and strategic actions to address issues of specific relevance to Africa, and also to ensure that national bodies are capable of addressing the unique concerns of African countries;

57. **Calls upon** ECA, and the African Union Commission and other pan-African institutions to work collaboratively in promoting and advocating the importance of geospatial information in the achievement of sustainable development objectives at national, regional and international levels among member States, non-governmental organizations, academia, the private sector and other stakeholders;

58. **Urges** member States to give priority to the dialogues required to ensure that national statistical, planning and mapping authorities collaborate effectively in the development of respective data infrastructure and systems, with a view to research optimal institutional arrangements for shared benefits for all concerned;

59. **Requests** ECA and the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Africa to continue to develop the African spatial statistical framework and the development of guidelines for “geo-enabling” the national strategies for the development of statistics;

On partners’ Statistical Capacity-Building Programmes

60. **Takes note of** partners’ statistical capacity-building programmes and **recommends** that they foster synergies and **coordinate** actions in support of national statistical systems in financial, technical and human resources;

61. **Urges** member States to integrate the International Comparison Programme into regular price collection as best practice and use, especially in the light of the AfCTA process;

62. **Urges** member States to advocate the use of data and information from the International Comparison Programme for promoting trade and regional integration;

63. **Urges** all partners, including countries, regional and international agencies and donors, to scale up their collective efforts to complete the International Comparison Programme 2017 cycle in a timely manner;

Preparation of the fiftieth session of the United Nations Statistical Commission

64. **Takes note of** the guidance provided, with a view to enhancing the contribution of Africa to the deliberations of the fiftieth session of the United Nations Statistical Commission, and **encourages** all countries to participate actively in the preparation of a common African position;

Proposed date and venue of the seventh session of the Statistical Commission for Africa

65. **Requests** ECA to make the necessary arrangements for the convening of the seventh meeting of the Statistical Commission for Africa, in Addis Ababa, in October 2020.