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Session 1 – Invited paper

2010 WORLD PROGRAMME ON POPULATION AND HOUSING CENSUSES AND RELATED SURVEYS

Submitted by United Nations Statistics Division, DESA*

1. The United Nations Statistics Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs is initiating the *2010 World Programme on Population and Housing Censuses*, to be implemented from 2005-2014. The goal of the *World Programme* is for all countries and areas to agree on a set of accepted international principles and recommendations governing the conduct of censuses; to conduct a census during the period 2005-2014; and to disseminate census results in a timely manner.
2. A major goal of the World Programme is to build support for the implementation of principles and recommendations approved by the Statistical Commission and other UN Regional Bodies, including the United Nations Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses, the ECE Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses; the United

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Nations Principles and Recommendations for a Vital Statistics System and the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics. The 2010 World Programme will encourage the use of internationally agreed statistical classifications and support the collection, compilation and dissemination of results using internationally agreed standards and methods.

3. The World Programme aims to provide technically sound advice that builds upon the existing strengths of national statistical offices while considering ways to also strengthen overall national statistical capacity in the process of conducting censuses and intercensal national surveys. The 2010 World Programme must address a wide range of technical questions related to implementation of large-scale national surveys and censuses and must also be prepared to work with national statistical offices considering all aspects of alternative designs for total population enumeration.

4. Through a set of coordinated agreements, the 2010 World Programme will provide advisory services for the planning and management of population and housing censuses and related national surveys. The goal of advisory services is to identify common solutions to technical and organizational problems that many countries confront in the planning and conducting of a census or a census-related large-scale national survey. Through these technical cooperation activities, the 2010 World Programme aims to strengthen national capacity to complete censuses at regular intervals, with defined periodicity, thus facilitating the statistical assessment of major changes in populations and housing over time. Technical advisory services will also support the preparation and use of standardized census administrative reports for purposes of improved metadata description and exchange within and among countries.

5. The World Programme seeks to encourage the effective sharing and exchange of national experience through international, regional and sub-regional exchange programmes, workshops, and other such group mechanisms, supported by a Trust Fund for Population and Housing Censuses that will work to bridge the distances between national statistical offices in their exchange of resources and support by providing the funds needed for travel, consultation, fellowships and advisory exchanges, as well as for the exchange of research, development and testing of standards and methods necessary for the successful conducting of censuses.

6. A critical aspect of the upcoming 2010 World Programme is to support the effective and creative use of information technology (IT) while also working within a wide range of IT capabilities of national statistical offices.

7. The World Programme will emphasize the necessity of reviewing, analyzing and disseminating existing census data prior to collecting new data.

8. The United Nations Statistics Division, in support of the 2010 World Programme, will:

- a. Coordinate the review and publication of a set of accepted international principles and recommendations governing the conduct of censuses, prepare training materials and conduct expert group meetings and workshops in support of their implementation;
- b. Support the special initiative for active involvement of Member States working in partnership with each other, in cooperation with the United Nations including its Regional Commissions and other intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, for the exchange of technical expertise and other resources needed for successful implementation of a population and housing census including

implementation and management of a Trust Fund for Population and Housing Censuses in support of these activities;

- c. Provide inter-regional advisory services for the purpose of strengthening active involvement of Member States including the important support of Member States for their identification of technical expertise and other resources to be shared in the conduct of their censuses;
- d. Report on the conducting of censuses during the period 2005-2014 and make this information widely available through the Demographic and Social Statistics website, including standardized metadata and other descriptive information on the quality and quantity of census results; and
- e. Disseminate in a timely manner, national census results, for use world-wide both electronically and in print.

The Statistics Division will build its activities in support of the World Programme upon the recommendations taken by the upcoming Expert Group meeting on critical issues related to planning the next round of population and housing censuses and the resultant actions taken by the Statistical Commission at its future sessions.

9. Strong interaction and collaboration with the Regional Commissions, and active involvement of Member States, is a necessary prerequisite for the 2010 World Programme to succeed.
