

Third meeting of the 1999/2000 Bureau

(Geneva, 25-26 January 2000)

Summary of the main conclusions of the meeting**I. INTRODUCTION**

1. The third meeting of the 1999/2000 Bureau was held in Geneva from 25-26 January 2000. The following members of the Bureau attended: Svein Longva (Chair), Pilar Martín-Guzmán, Hallgrímur Snorrason and Rein Veetousme. Donal Murphy and Tadeusz Toczyński, whom the Bureau had co-opted to serve on the Bureau until the 2000 CES plenary session in place of former Bureau members Ed Outrata and Adrian Abrahamse, also attended. The following permanent participants also attended: Yves Franchet, Louis Kincannon and Paola Garonna (Hermann Habermann was unable to attend, but Willem de Vries attended on his behalf). Carol Carson of the IMF attended at the invitation of the Bureau. The Bureau had also invited Mikhail Korolev of CIS/STAT to attend, but he could not attend because of other responsibilities. Ronald Luttkhuizen of Statistics Netherlands attended at the invitation of the Chairman. Members of the Bureau were assisted by the following persons: Bjorg Moen of Statistics Norway; James Whitworth of Eurostat; and Janice Owens of OECD. John Kelly of ECE served as Secretary of the meeting.

II. REVIEW OF THE DRAFT UPDATED VERSION OF THE INTEGRATED PRESENTATION**a) Programme activity 1: Organization and operation of statistical services**

2. **P.E. 1.2, Managerial and policy issues of direct concern to presidents of NSOs:** The Bureau agreed that it should take up the question of the Fundamental Principles at its October 2000 meeting (**action by the ECE secretariat**), especially since the confidentiality of data is becoming an issue of growing concern in many countries in transition. The Bureau should consider at that time whether the topic should also be taken up at the 2001 plenary session.

3. Statistics Norway agreed to replace Statistics Iceland as the Rapporteur for this programme element (**action by the ECE secretariat**).

4. **P.E. 1.3, Countries in transition in the ECE region:** An item should be included on the agenda of the October 2000 Bureau meeting to enable the Bureau to have a strategic discussion on the work programme of the Statistical Division's Regional Adviser in statistics (**action by the ECE secretariat**).

5. **P.E. 1.4, Relations with countries outside the ECE region:** The Bureau was asked to consider whether the Statistical Division and the Conference should be working more actively with countries in the Mediterranean region. There was general agreement, however, that it would not be practical for this to be done with the present very limited resource base. There was also general agreement that with the available resource base, the Statistical Division and the Conference should focus its efforts instead on countries in transition in the ECE region.

b) Programme activity 2: Technical infrastructure and other cross-cutting issues

6. **P.E. 2.1, Management of information technology infrastructure:** There was general agreement that the objectives of this P.E. seem old-fashioned and are in need of being updated. The Bureau asked ECE, as the Rapporteur of this work area, to propose an updated text on the objectives for

the October 2000 Bureau meeting (**action by the ECE secretariat**).

7. **P.E. 2.3, Dissemination and interchange of statistical information:** The first bullet in the “attention of the Conference is called to” section should be expanded to refer also to Eurostat (**action by the ECE secretariat**).

8. **P.E. 2.4, Statistical classifications:** Attention of the Conference should be called (**action by the ECE secretariat**) to the fact that economies are changing much faster than statistical classifications, and that it is a growing challenge for statistical offices to successfully provide policy makers with the types of statistics that they require. Developing satellite classifications or “pilot” classifications were seen as a possible way of helping to ensure that advances can be made more quickly.

9. Attention of the Conference should be called to short paper that Eurostat and OECD offered to prepare for the plenary session, in which good practices would be cited and possible ways forward would be identified (**action by Eurostat and OECD in preparing a paper for the plenary session (with OECD taking the lead), and by the ECE secretariat in preparing the agenda**). The Bureau agreed that the joint paper would not be presented as a separate agenda item, but would instead be covered during the plenary session’s consideration of the “40 or so PEs” at the end of the plenary’s consideration of the Integrated Presentation.

10. **P.E. 2.8, Sustainable development indicators:** The Bureau agreed that the Objectives of this PE are too narrow, and it asked OECD, as the proposed Rapporteur of the element, to redraft them. It also asked the OECD to look over all the text in P.E. 2.8 and to propose improved formulations which could be included in the amended version of the IP which is to be submitted to the 2000 plenary session (**action by the OECD**).

11. The Bureau noted that there was duplication in the texts appearing under the WHO and WHO-Europe headings, and it agreed that only the text under WHO-Euro should be retained (**action by the ECE secretariat**).

c) Programme activity 3: Economic statistics

12. **P.E. 3.1, Implementation of the SNA:** The reference in the last bullet of the “Attention of the Conference is called to” section to OECD phasing out its publication of

short-term economic indicators is incorrect, and therefore the text in this bullet should be corrected (**action by the ECE secretariat**).

13. The text describing Eurostat activities should be amended to make more visible Eurostat’s work on the compilation of data on constant prices (**action by the Eurostat**).

14. **P.E. 3.2, Money and banking, government finance and balance of payments:** Carol Carson asked the ECE secretariat to check to determine whether the objectives of this PE were amended in the manner that the Rapporteur had suggested, and in light of what the Bureau had decided at its November 1999 meeting (**action by the ECE secretariat**).

15. **P.E. 3.5, Distributive trade:** The language used in the text under the “Attention of the Conference is called to” section should be toned down, as nowhere else in the IP do we refer to “excellent” work being done (**action by the ECE secretariat**).

16. **P.E. 3.7, Tourism:** The wording of the first bullet of the “Attention of the Conference is called to” section should be amended to read “The good progress being made by OECD, Eurostat and the World Tourism Organization in developing a common conceptual framework for tourism satellite accounts” **(action by the ECE secretariat).**

17. **P.E. 3.8, Other marketed services, and non-marketed services:** The Bureau noted that Eurostat reported its work on “statistics for an Information Society” under this programme element, but that OECD reported the similar type of work that it is engaged in under P.E. 3.5. It was suggested that it would be better if OECD reported its work under this P.E. instead of under P.E. 3.5 **(action by the OECD).**

18. **P.E. 3.9, Price statistics:** Attention of the Conference should be drawn to: a) Eurostat’s intention to continue its efforts to increase the quality of PPPs, and to expand their production to the regional level; and b) the fact that the ICP is to be considered at the March 1999 session of the UN Statistical Commission **(action by the ECE).**

d) Programme activity 4: Social and demographic statistics

19. **General remarks on the experimental way of preparing P.A. 4 in this alternative manner for purposes of the 2000 plenary session:** There was general agreement that the results achieved in the experiment were positive. The Bureau found this method of presenting the material preferable to the way that was used in the past, because the text is shorter and more interesting to read. Eurostat suggested that a further improvement might be to use a different form of classification in presenting material in the “Activities and means” section. Wim Devries agreed to give further consideration to this, and to report back to the Bureau at the Bureau’s autumn 2000 meeting **(action by the UNSD/Wim DeVries).**

20. **Rapporteur reports:** The Bureau also discussed the UNSD’s approach in its IP of having countries serve as Rapporteurs of PEs instead of international organizations. There was general agreement that in the Conference’s IP international organizations should continue to serve as Rapporteurs, but that their role would be restricted to preparing presentations for the Bureau’s annual autumn meetings in which they (i) identify any important issues in their field of statistics which they consider warrant being brought to the attention of the Bureau and/or Conference (e.g. key new issues, gaps or problems), and (ii) describe the extent to which progress is being made collectively by the international organizations towards what has been presented in the IP as Member States’ Objectives (Problem Outline) and Expected Outputs (Strategic Medium-Term Goals) for international statistical work in that field. There was also general agreement that the Rapporteurs should generally provide these statements to the ECE secretariat no later than four weeks before the date of the Bureau’s annual autumn meeting (in the case of the 4-5 October 2000 Bureau meeting, this suggested timing schedule was judged to be too close to the summer holidays, and therefore it was agreed by ECE, Eurostat and OECD that the applicable deadline this year should be 18 September 2000) **(action by the Rapporteurs -- i.e., by ECE, Eurostat, OECD, IMF, etc. -- by 18 September 2000).**

21. **Contributions by Bureau members to the in-depth reviews of PAs at the Bureau’s annual autumn meetings:** There was also general agreement that country representatives are best placed for assessing whether the text in the IP that describes Member States’ Objectives (Problem Outline) and Expected Outputs (Strategic Medium-Term Goals) for international statistical work in a given field of statistics is in need of revision. Therefore, the Bureau members agreed to do this for the Bureau’s annual autumn meeting. It was also agreed that bureau members should generally send these contributions to the secretariat two weeks prior to the dates of the Bureau meeting. However, in the case of the 4-5 October 2000 Bureau meeting, the suggested deadline will be extended to 26 September, in order to allow Bureau members to assess what the

Rapporteurs have said in their reports (see para. 20 above) (**action by the Bureau members by 26 September in the case of the 4-5 October 2000 Bureau meeting**).

22. At the Bureau's autumn 2000 meeting, the Bureau will conduct in-depth reviews of PAs 1, 2 and 4. With reference to PA 4, the allocation of PEs to individual Bureau members was agreed: **Svein Longva** (PEs 4.10 and 4.11b); **Pilar Martín-Guzmán** (PEs 4.4, 4.7a and 4.7b); **Hallgrímur Snorrason** (PEs 4.5, 4.6 and 4.9); **Rein Veetousme** (PEs 4.2a, 4.2b and 4.11c); and **Tadeusz Toczynski** (PEs 4.1, 4.3, 4.8 and 4.11a). With reference to the in-depth reviews of PAs 1 and 2 at the Bureau's autumn 2000 meeting, the ECE secretariat will contact Bureau members by e-mail prior to the 2000 CES plenary session to try to arrange for a distribution of the PEs in these PAs among the Bureau members (**action by the ECE secretariat and by the Bureau members**).

23. **Material presented in the "Activities and means" section under the headings "Ongoing methodological work" and "Priority objectives"**: It was agreed that the material presented under these headings in some PEs for some organizations (e.g. for OECD in PE 4.5) was repetitive, and therefore that it should be merged (**action by the ECE secretariat**).

24. **Finalization of the text in PA 4**: The Bureau asked the ECE secretariat to edit and complete PA 4 for presentation to the 2000 plenary session on an experimental basis. It also asked the secretariat to include an explanatory note at the beginning of PA 4 pointing out (i) the reasons for changing the PE numbers to align the CES classification with the ACC classification, and (ii) that if the Conference is satisfied with this alternative way of presenting information in the IP, that for the 2001 and later plenary sessions the entire IP (i.e. PAs 1-6) will be prepared in this way (**action by the ECE secretariat**).

25. **P.E. 4.11a, Social indicators and frameworks**: The text under "Attention of the Conference is called to" section should be deleted (**action by the ECE secretariat**).

e) Programme activity 5: Environment statistics

26. **P.E. 5.1, Sectoral concepts, definitions and classifications**: The Bureau noted that the secretariat had tried to present information under this PE in the IP separately by theme (e.g., emissions, waste, water, etc.), in compliance with what the Bureau had asked at its November 1999 meeting. However, the Bureau noted that the results obtained were not very satisfactory, and therefore it asked the secretariat to continue presenting material in this PE in the traditional way (**action by the ECE secretariat**). The Bureau also considered that the current breakdown of Programme Activity 5 into fields of statistical activities was not fully satisfactory, and so it asked Eurostat to propose a better classification, and one that would be consistent with the ACC classification (**action by Eurostat**).

27. **P.E. 5.3, Environmental databases and reporting**: OECD and Eurostat suggested that for purposes of this PE it would be useful if a given organization was designated as being the "Lead Organization" for collecting and validating data in individual fields of environment statistics. The following was given as an illustration of how different fields could be allocated to different international organizations: a) Eurostat: waste, water use, land use and environmental expenditure; b) OECD: wildlife, forests, marine waters, inland water quality and noise; and c) EEA: air emissions. The Bureau agreed that an arrangement like that could result in better coordination of work among the international organizations and in a decrease in the response burden on countries. It asked Eurostat and OECD to continue discussions on this, with a view to Eurostat proposing a mutually agreeable division of labour to the Bureau at its autumn 2000 meeting (**action by Eurostat**). It also agreed that the attention of the Conference should be called to this possible development (**action by the ECE**

secretariat).

28. **P.E. 5.4, Meteorology statistics:** The Bureau noted that this new programme element had been included in the P.A. 5 of the IP because it is a separate field of statistics in the ACC classification. However, it noted that text had not yet been formulated for the “Objectives” and “Expected collective outputs” sections of the PE. As this field of statistics was added to the CES classification to correspond to the ACC classification, UNSD was asked to attempt to provide the missing text in time to include it in the version of the IP that will be submitted to the 2000 plenary session (**action by UNSD/Wim DeVries**).

f) Programme activity 6: Dissemination and support for secretariat activities

29. **P.E. 6.1, Coordination of international data collection:** Attention of the Conference should be called (**action by the ECE secretariat**) to the new Protocol that Eurostat and OECD signed at the 25 January 2000 ECE-Eurostat-OECD JPR meeting, which constitutes a memorandum of understanding between the OECD and Eurostat on the exchange of statistical data between the two organizations. The protocol is viewed by each of the organizations as a model which could serve as a guide for similar types of arrangements that Eurostat and OECD could enter into with other organizations concerning the exchange of statistical data.

30. It was agreed that the text for Eurostat in the “Activities and means” section should be amended to include reference to the new Web site that Eurostat will have effective February 2000 (**action by Eurostat**).

g) General comment covering PAs 1-6

31. **Priority menus in the annexes of addenda 1-6:** There was general agreement that the material presented in these annexes should either be presented in an improved manner that better describes the nature of the work being undertaken, or that the annexes be deleted from the addenda in their entirety, because the text presented there now was not considered to be sufficiently informative or useful (**action by the ECE secretariat**).

h) Other conclusions

32. The Bureau agreed that the discussion of the 40 or so programme elements which were not selected by the Bureau for an in-depth review at the plenary session would be facilitated if each Bureau member took responsibility for briefly introducing the discussion of each of the six programme activity areas. These introductory comments by the Bureau members should attempt to identify strategic issues in the programme activity area, and promote more active involvement of countries in the discussion that takes place at the plenary session. Bureau members agreed with the following allocation of Programme Activities among the Bureau members:

P.A. 1, Organization and operation of statistical services: (to be handled by Tadeusz Toczynski) (**Action by Tadeusz Toczynski**).

P.A. 2, Technical infrastructure and other cross-cutting issues: (to be handled by Donal Murphy) (**Action by Donal Murphy**).

P.A. 3, Economic statistics: (to be handled by Hallgrimur Snorrason) (**Action by Hallgrimur Snorrason**).

P.A. 4, Social and demographic statistics: (to be handled by Svein Longva) (**Action by Svein Longva**).

P.A. 5, Environment statistics: (to be handled by Pilar Martín-Guzmán) (**Action by Pilar Martín-Guzmán**).

P.A. 6, Dissemination and support for secretariat activities: (to be handled by Rein

Veetousme) (Action by Rein Veetousme).

III. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 1999/2000 WORK PROGRAMME

33. The Bureau noted that all the activities included in the Conference's work programme for the initial part of 1999/2000 have been carried out as planned. The Bureau also noted that at its next meeting -- which is to be held in Paris immediately before the opening of the plenary session -- it will be informed of the extent to which the planned work programme for the last part of 1999/2000 has been carried out.

IV. OUTCOME OF THE JANUARY 2000 JPR MEETING

34. Paolo Garonna informed the Bureau of the outcome of the 25 January ECE-Eurostat-OECD Joint Programme Review meeting. The report of the JPR meeting is presented in the Annex.

V. IMF REPORTS ON OBSERVANCE OF CODES AND STANDARDS

35. Carol Carson provided the Bureau with an updated oral progress report on countries' observance of international codes and standards. She noted that the experience that has been acquired to date from the assessment reports has been largely positive from the standpoint of both the IMF and the countries concerned. Yves Franchet reported that Eurostat is engaged in similar types of assessments, and indicated that it would be useful for Eurostat and IMF to share experiences as both organizations could learn from each other. A suggestion was made to consider this topic within the context of the seminar session that Statistics Netherlands is organizing within the plenary session. It was also suggested that work in this field that has been carried out by the IMF and Eurostat could serve as a basis of discussion on this topic.

(NOTE FOR THE BUREAU: After the Bureau meeting this topic was discussed further by Paolo Garonna, Carol Carson, Svein Longva and Yves Franchet. As a result of that discussion, it was concluded that instead of attempting to discuss this subject at the plenary session as part of the seminar session that Statistics Netherlands is organizing, it would be preferable to view the topic as one of the PEs to be discussed in depth during the Conference's review of the updated version of the Integrated Presentation. It was also foreseen that the topic would be discussed on the basis of short papers to be contributed by Bulgaria and Switzerland, which would be supplemented by brief oral presentations by IMF and Eurostat **(action by the ECE secretariat in following up with Bulgaria and Switzerland)**. Svein Longva sent a letter to the Bureau Vice-Chairs on 7 February to notify them of this change in the plans for the treatment of this subject at the plenary session).

VI. INTERNATIONAL STATISTICAL WORK IN SOUTH EAST EUROPE

36. The Bureau noted that there are many actions taking place related to the reconstruction of Southeast Europe including many in the field of statistics. As with many other projects, significant amounts of resources are being devoted to this task, but there is a serious lack of coordination (e.g. in conceptual management and in institution building). Organisations such as Eurostat and ECE can contribute to and benefit from taking part in these activities aimed at increasing the statistical capacity of the countries and territories in this region. The Bureau agreed that Paolo Garonna and Yves Franchet should discuss this issue further with the ECE Executive Secretary to explore possible collaborative undertakings that would be mutually beneficial for both parties.

VII. RECOMMENDED TOPIC FOR SUBSTANTIVE DISCUSSION AT THE 2001 PLENARY SESSION

37. The Bureau agreed to recommend the following topic to the Conference as the topic for substantive

discussion at the 2001 plenary session “Small area statistics, and statistics for small countries”. It also asked Pilar Martín-Guzmán to organize the session, and she agreed to do so. It was also agreed that in order to provide a greater amount of lead time for finalizing plans for that session, Pilar should submit an outline of the planned structure and content to the Bureau when it meets in June immediately prior to the opening of the 2000 plenary session (**action by Pilar Martín-Guzmán, and by the ECE secretariat with respect to the agenda of the next Bureau meeting**).

38. The Bureau also considered that the list of possible topics for substantive discussion at future plenary sessions contained in CES/BUR.2000/22 is an out-dated one, and therefore it asked the ECE secretariat to ask NSIs to recommend possible new topics for consideration at the 2002 and later plenary sessions. It suggested in this regard that the letter that it asked the secretariat to send to all members of the Conference prior to the 2000 plenary session in order to obtain their views and suggestions for topics and PEs to be reviewed in depth at the 2001 and later plenary sessions (see CES/BUR.2000/17, para. 32), be expanded to ask them to also recommend possible topics for substantive discussion at future plenary sessions (**action by the ECE secretariat prior to the 2000 plenary session**).

VIII. PLANNED WORK OF THE ECE/PAU ON FFS-TYPE SURVEYS

39. The Bureau thanked the PAU staff for the note that it had prepared for this agenda item. It expressed general satisfaction with the planned work programme and with developments that are occurring with respect to the Unit’s attempts to acquire extra-budgetary financial resources to fund its work programme. The Bureau also indicated that it is looking forward to receiving an updated report on the results obtained in the evaluation of the first round of FFS-type surveys.

IX. PRIORITISATION OF PROGRAMME ELEMENTS IN THE CONFERENCE’S WORK PROGRAMME

40. At the invitation of the Bureau, Ambassador Somol, Vice-Chairman of the Economic Commission for Europe, and Mr. Charles Moore of the U.K. Mission, Chairman of the Commission’s Group of Experts on the Programme of Work, participated in the Bureau meeting for discussion on this subject.

41. Aside from one exception, the Bureau endorsed the proposed prioritization of the Conference’s work programme that was presented in CES/BUR.2000/24, and asked the secretariat to present it to the 2000 CES plenary session as the Bureau’s recommended prioritization of the Conference’s work programme. The one exception pertained to the text of the box in Section 2 of the proforma concerning what additional activities the Conference would undertake if it were to receive one additional post. The Bureau agreed that the text presented in that box should be expanded to refer also to the work that the Conference would do in contributing to international statistical cooperation in the Balkans if it were to receive an additional post (**action by the ECE secretariat**).

X. MEETING WITH AMBASSADOR SOMOL (CZECH REPUBLIC), VICE-CHAIRMAN OF THE ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

42. At the invitation of the Bureau, Ambassador Somol, Vice-Chairman of the Economic Commission for Europe, and Mr. Charles Moore of the U.K. Mission, Chairman of the Commission’s Group of Experts on the Programme of Work, participated in the Bureau meeting for discussion on this subject. Patrice Robineau and Parisudhi Kalampasut of the Office of the Executive Secretary sat in at the Bureau meeting for discussion under this item.

43. Under this item Yves Franchet and Louis Kincannon explained the many important ways ECE,

Eurostat and OECD collaborate actively together in their joint efforts to better respond to the interests and desires of national statistical offices. Ambassador Somol stated that he viewed both the Conference and the CES Bureau as “special bodies” in the ECE because of their composition, and he stated that he considered the close working relationships between ECE, Eurostat, OECD and other international organizations exemplary. He also said that he considered the Integrated Presentation of International Statistical Work that the Conference produces each year to be a valuable and effective tool of coordination at both the national and the international level.

XI. URBAN AND RURAL DEFINITIONS AND CLASSIFICATIONS

44. The Bureau thanked Eurostat for the note that it had prepared on this subject.

XII. RELATIONS BETWEEN OFFICIAL AND ACADEMIC STATISTICIANS

45. The Bureau thanked Pilar and Tadeusz for their papers, as they had helped the Bureau to identify a way forward in this field. There was general agreement that progress needed to be made, but that it should occur in a planned and phased manner.

It was agreed that the first step should consist of the questionnaire in Pilar’s paper – amended on the basis of Bureau members’ comments – being sent to NSIs. In this regard, Bureau members agreed to send Pilar any comments they had on her questionnaire by 10 February at the latest (**action by all Bureau members by EOB on 10 February 2000**).

The second step should consist of a separate questionnaire being sent to NSIs to determine how they are using data for analytical purposes (**action by Pilar Martín-Guzmán**).

The third step would be to have a short overview paper prepared for distribution as a Room Document at the 2000 plenary session, summarizing the results that have been achieved to date and outlining planned further work (**action by Pilar Martín-Guzmán before 13 June 2000**).

The fourth step would consist of a paper being prepared that describes some “good practices”. In this regard, Pilar was asked to prepare a separate short overview paper on this for the next meeting of the Bureau that will be held before the opening of the 2000 plenary session (**action by Pilar Martín-Guzmán before 13 June 2000**).

In the meantime, a list of relevant reference material should be prepared and placed on the Web page of Spain’s Instituto Nacional de Estadística, and a cross-reference to that Web site should be made on ECE’s Web page (**action by Pilar Martín-Guzmán and ECE**).

The fifth step would be for the Bureau to take this matter up again at one or more of its meetings in 2000/2001, with the goal of presenting something concrete (and possibly a draft set of Guidelines) to the Conference at its 2001 plenary session (**action by the Bureau in 2000/2001**).

XIII. PLANS FOR THE TOPIC OF SUBSTANTIVE DISCUSSION SESSION AT THE 2000 CES PLENARY SESSION

46. The Bureau was generally in agreement with Statistics Netherlands’ plans for organizing the seminar session of the 2000 plenary session. However, it agreed that the fourth sub-item (Is more research and analysis by NSIs needed?) should be dropped, and that the seminar session be restricted to the remaining three sub-items. It also considered that the planned title of the session (Consequences of accelerated integration of international statistics) was too dull, and asked Statistics Netherlands to try to come up with a title that sounded more interesting. (**Action by Statistics Netherlands**).

XIV. DRAFT AGENDA AND TIMETABLE OF THE 2000 PLENARY SESSION

47. The Bureau was generally in agreement with the planned timetable and structure of the plenary session

that was shown in CES/BUR.2000/29. However, it agreed that the hours of the plenary session on 14 June should be changed to 9:00-12:00 and 2:00 to 5:00 in order to accommodate INSEE's request for a social programme that evening for participants at the plenary session (**action by the ECE secretariat**).

48. The Bureau also agreed that the in-depth review of agriculture statistics that is to be done as part of the Conference's review of the Integrated Presentation should take place on Wednesday morning (14 June) instead of Tuesday afternoon so as to facilitate the EEA's attendance and participation in the plenary session. It also agreed that the time allotted to the session on sustainable development indicators should be expanded to allow time for short papers to be presented by both OECD and the EEA (**action by Eurostat in approaching the EEA to ask it to prepare a short paper for this agenda item**).

49. The Bureau also agreed that an additional item should be added to the agenda to allow time for the Conference to have a brief discussion on the Room document Pilar Martín-Guzmán is to prepare on relations between "official and academic" statisticians (see para. 45 above) (**action by Pilar Martín-Guzmán with respect to the room document and by the ECE secretariat with respect to the preparation of the agenda**).

50. Finally, the Bureau agreed that the reference to "Theme 4" in Statistics Netherlands' seminar session should be deleted, in accordance with the Bureau's decision to restrict discussion under this item to three sub-items (see para. 46 above) (**action by the ECE secretariat**).

XV. OTHER BUSINESS

51. Paolo Garonna informed the Bureau under this item of the preparations under way for the World Summit for Social Development, which will take place in Geneva in June 2000. Louis Kincannon offered to send Paolo material outlining recent work that the OECD has done in this field (**action by OECD**).

XVI. DATE AND VENUE OF THE NEXT BUREAU MEETINGS

52. The Bureau agreed to have a luncheon meeting in Paris at noon on 13 June, immediately prior to the opening of the 2000 plenary session.

53. The Bureau also provisionally agreed, subject to the agreement of the newly elected 2000/2001 Bureau, to hold its autumn 2000 meeting from 4-5 October, in Oslo.

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Note: A Subscription Dinner for the Bureau was organised on 25 January, to which Paolo Garonna had invited Jean-Maurice Léger of the World Trade Organization to attend and to informally inform the Bureau of the WTO Conference that was recently held in Seattle. Bureau members found Jean-Maurice's presentation very interesting, and thanked him for it.

REPORT OF THE JOINT PROGRAMME REVIEW MEETING**(Geneva, 25 January 2000)**

1. The annual meeting of the ECE-Eurostat-OECD Joint Programme Review was held in Geneva on 25 January 2000. The participants were:

ECE: Mr. P. Garonna, Mr. J. Kelly, Mr. J. Riecan

Eurostat: Mr. Y. Franchet, Mr. J. Whitworth

OECD: Mr. C. L. Kincannon, Ms. J. Owens

Data protocol

2. The representatives of OECD and Eurostat signed the Memorandum of Understanding on data exchange between the two organisations.

Environment statistics and EEA attendance at meetings

3. In order to make the most of joint questionnaire a principle sharing of leadership was suggested. Some topics (waste, water and environmental expenditure) will be lead by Eurostat, and OECD with EEA will be responsible for other parts of the joint questionnaire. The OECD representative suggested involving also the UN Statistics Division in the coordination and data sharing.

4. There was a request for participation of European Environment Agency (EEA) at the Conference's meetings. EEA experts are invited to (but seldom attend) at technical meetings, but EEA should be involved in coordination too. Therefore, it was suggested that the provisional agenda of the 2000 plenary session be modified in order to enable EEA representatives to follow the discussion on all topics within the limited time. The change consists of re-ordering topics within item 3 – to move the discussion on agriculture statistics to Wednesday and the discussion on aging to Tuesday. The Eurostat's representative also informed that it would ask EEA to contribute a paper for item 5 on sustainable development indicators.

5. The ECE representative reported, that it was not easy to structure the Integrated Presentation in P.A. 5 according to themes as requested by the Bureau at its November 1999 meeting. This is because many activities are broad and cover more than one theme. The ECE compared two approaches and found the classic way more user friendly.

Ranking OECD statistical activities

6. The OECD representative informed participants on process of ranking the OECD's activities. OECD's clients and member countries are involved in the process. It was agreed that the CES Bureau may be interested in being informed about the ranking of statistical activities, because it may result in modifying the priorities in other organizations.

Co-ordination of information requests

7. The OECD requested that all information requests be addressed directly to the Statistics Directorate (Ms. Owens), or at least copy such requests to the Statistics Directorate. Eurostat agreed that they would also prefer centrally addressed requests to Eurostat, but they pointed out that the situation with "City Groups" is specific, and perhaps contacts of individual groups may be contacted directly. It was agreed that the ECE would send a checklist to Ms. Owens so that she will be able to monitor the fulfillment of all requests that concern statistics.

8. A proposal was made to include the UNSD in the Joint Programme Review exercise. OECD and Eurostat noted that the ACC subcommittee for statistical activities is an appropriate forum for coordination with UNSD. Nevertheless, it was agreed to invite UNSD to the next meeting and consider their possible integration into JPR.

Initial reactions to experiment re P.A.4 of the Integrated Presentation

9. The representatives of the three organizations agreed that the new presentation is more transparent and shorter. However, it was stressed that there are organizations that are active in some areas, but their activities do not fall under standard headings of the new format. Therefore, it was suggested to list names of such organizations at the end of each programme element in order to keep record of all international organizations having some statistical activities.

Other business

10. The ECE representative stressed the importance of social indicators in relation to the coming Social Summit and suggested to prepare a concrete proposal for what is feasible and to try to fit it in the context of the Social Summit. Eurostat's representative informed that the social indicators are a new priority of the European Union under the Portugal's presidency. The participants agreed to seek for the Bureau's reactions.

11. The OECD's representative informed the participants about its process to build statistical capacity as a foundation for effective development policies ("PARIS21"). More information can be found on the Web site: <http://www.paris21.org>. Eurostat's representative suggested that Europe can contribute to this initiative with its experience in three areas: (i) Management and coordination, (ii) Institution capacity building, (iii) Resources management as a subsidiary to the first two processes.
