

UNITED NATIONS  NATIONS UNIES

WORLD STATISTICS DAY

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Distinguished colleagues and professional friends around the world,

I was there in 2010, when we convinced the United Nations General Assembly to institute a World Statistics Day every 5 years. A day to celebrate our accomplishments as a professional community. A day to reach out to other data communities, like the geospatial data or big data communities, to work together and build – jointly - the best information systems possible. A day to communicate with our users – and convince them that investing in high quality data is always a smart thing to do.

Today we are celebrating our third World Statistics Day! It gives me great pleasure to celebrate it with you! I have never been prouder of our global statistical family. In this challenging moment of a global pandemic we have come together united in our goal of connecting the world with data we can trust.

Today, trusted data are needed more urgently than ever, to inform critical interventions to save lives, restart the economy, address the long-term social impacts of the pandemic and make much needed progress towards our common sustainable development goals. Demand for timely, quality, relevant and trusted data has never been higher. Only a modern, innovative and agile national statistical system will be able to satisfy this demand.

The role of official statistics is evolving, and there are challenges as new data actors emerge. In a world where there is an abundance of information, we, the global statistical community, have a special responsibility to ensure that the trusted data we produce, built on common standards, methodologies and shared notions of quality, remain the backbone of the changing data landscape.

National Statistical Offices need to take the lead in the evolving data ecosystem, working closely with partners on the basis of clearly established principles. A good starting point are our ten Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics. They call for scientific methods and the independence of the national statistical system. The application of these United Nations

Fundamental Principles – even beyond official statistics - will build the trust to guide sound policy decision making at all levels.

Dear colleagues,

Our hard work is driven by a shared professional ethos. As we celebrate today, we stand together. Each and every statistician around the world is honored on this day!

Celebrations to mark the Day are different in each country. My office, the United Nations Statistics Division marks the Day with the launch of the World's Women 2020, and also the launch of a new global Network for UN data officers and statisticians; and of course there is the virtual World Data Forum 2020, our online venue bringing together all those who care about data and statistics.

Wherever you are, let's celebrate together! Thank you very much for your attention – and Happy World Statistics Day 2020.