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National Accounts and Economic Statistics - International Trade Statistics

**DECISIONS OF THE 35TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS STATISTICAL COMMISSION
RELEVANT TO INTERNATIONAL TRADE STATISTICS**

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Inter-Agency co-operation and coordination*

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DECISIONS OF THE 35TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS STATISTICAL COMMISSION RELEVANT TO INTERNATIONAL TRADE STATISTICS

The 35th session of the UNSC was held in New York on 2-5 March 2004. The Commission considered a wide range of issues (a full list of documents presented to the Commission and the Commission's report are available on the UN Statistics Division Web site at: <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/statcom/commission.htm>). The Commission's decisions directly relevant to International Trade Statistics are as follows.

Service statistics (item 4 (b) of the agenda)

The Commission:

- a) welcomed the reports presented by the OECD and the Voorburg Group, noting the wide variety of activities related to service statistics carried out by different groups;
- b) appreciated the work of the Voorburg Group, but cautioned against an expansion of topics discussed by the group;
- c) supported the strategic discussions planned for the next meeting of the Voorburg Group;
- d) supported OECD's proposal for a light approach to coordination, as set out in the report; noted the desire of countries and regional bodies to participate in future OECD and Voorburg Group meetings;
- e) emphasized that the OECD strategy paper, planned for 2005 should, among other things, provide guidance to the service statistics agenda, including the agenda for the Voorburg Group.

International economic and social classifications (item 6 (b) of the agenda)

The Commission:

- a) appreciated the work done by UNSD, the Expert Group and the Technical Subgroup in the revision of ISIC and CPC;
- b) endorsed the recommendations of the Expert Group as set out in the report, including the proposed high-level structure of ISIC as a basis for detailed work on the classification;
- c) noted the concerns of some delegates that continued work needed to be undertaken by the Expert Group.
- d) endorsed the work to ensure consistency of ISIC and NACE, including the compromise solution on repair activities;
- e) supported the proposal of developing a limited top-level structure for ISIC in conjunction with the ISWGNA;

- f) noted FAO's efforts to take the lead in the work on classification of agricultural activities and products, providing input into the revision of ISIC and CPC;
- g) agreed with the proposed work plan for the ISIC and CPC revision, including plans to consult national, international and regional organizations in this effort;
- h) noted the plans of the ILO for the revision of ISCO by 2007, involving the creation of a Technical Expert Group by June 2004, to network with the UN Expert Group on International Economic and Social Classifications;
- i) agreed with the conclusion of the International Merchandise Trade Statistics Task Force that the fourth revision of SITC be prepared for 2007.

Programme questions (item 6 (j) of the agenda)

The Commission:

- a) approved the changes to the work programme of the UN Statistics Division for 2004-2005 as presented orally by the Officer-in-Charge; in particular it endorsed the postponement of the output "Supplement to the Compilers Manual for International Merchandise Trade Statistics".