

Opening Remarks for the 9th NBS-OECD Workshop on National Accounts

Given by Mr. XU Yifan, Deputy Commissioner of the NBS

14th Nov, 2005

Good morning, distinguished Mr. Lequiller from National Accounts and Financial Statistics Division, OECD, Mr. Bloem from IMF, and Mr. Moyer from BEA, ladies and gentlemen.

In the occasion of 9th NBS-OECD workshop held in the beautiful island Gulangyu, Xiamen, please allow me on behalf of the NBS to extend my warm welcome to all experts from the OECD, IMF, BEA, all representatives from various domestic organizations; I will give my specific thanks to Xiamen University for their great efforts in organizing this workshop; to Fujian Statistical Bureau and Xiamen Statistical Bureau for their great support provided to this workshop.

In the transition of Chinese statistical system, NBS has conducted extensive, in depth, long-lasting and fruitful cooperation on national accounts with a number of international organizations including OECD, and some national statistical offices in developed countries. With technical assistance from these international cooperation, the transition of Chinese statistical system accomplished smoothly. In addition, the international cooperation also provided opportunities for training staffs from NBS and local statistical bureaus, and consequently upgrades the level of the national accounts of China.

The cooperation between NBS and OECD started in 1996, which is responsible by the Department of National Accounts in terms of NBS side. The contents of those cooperation mainly related to the following two areas. One is research on the important and difficult issues in national accounts; the other is analysis of cyclical indicators.

Cooperation in the field of the important and difficult issues in national accounts is undertaken in the form of NBS-OECD co-workshop on national accounts annually held in continent China and France alternatively. Up until now, eight workshops have been held since 1996. The topics on weak points in the existing practice of China covered by the eight workshops includes the compilation methods of national accounts, measurement of housing, measurement of real estate, value-added estimation of service activities, constant GDP estimation, capital stock estimation, quality assessment of GDP, seasonal adjustment, benchmarking quarterly data with annual statistics etc. In addition, NOE issue that beyond the boundary the current GDP accounting was also explored theoretically. The specific topics in this workshops consists of the revision of 1993 SNA, GDP estimation based on data from economic census, historical revision of GDP in terms of data from economic census, compilation method of government accounts, quarterly accounting etc. After each workshop, a bilingual paper collection entitled Research of Methodological Issues on National Accounts is compiled and published by NBS with translation sponsored by OECD. The most recent collection is series No. 8.

The passed workshops have helped staffs from Chinese side to obtain a systematic understanding of

international standards in some specific fields. Meanwhile, the differences between Chinese current practice and international recommendations have been better recognized. Such progress no doubt helped to improve the quality of personnel for national accounts, and to promote Chinese national accounts significantly. On the other hand, the passed workshops helped experts from OECD side to recognize the progress and problems existed in the field of Chinese national accounts, and form a better understanding about both Chinese economy and economic accounting.

The limited time of the transition resulted in the big gaps between the system of national accounts in China and those in developed, even some developing countries. Seeing it positively, these gaps provide considerable possibilities of cooperation between NBS and OECD. We hope to receive continuous support and assistant from international organizations including OECD as always. Obviously, the annual NBS-OECD workshop has contributed to the improvement of Chinese national accounts positively, which we hope can be persisted in long term.

Finally, I would like to wish a complete success for the workshop in advance! And a very happy stay in beautiful Xiamen for all participants.

Thanks!

XU Yifan

Deputy Commissioner, NBS

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