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Dear Colleagues,

It is with great pleasure that I am writing to you today to announce that a few hours ago the United Nations General Assembly endorsed the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics. This means that the most universal, global political body has now endorsed our Principles, which guide the production and dissemination of all official statistics around the globe. This is an historic moment for the global statistical system.

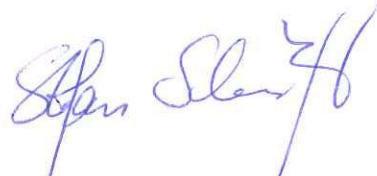
I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of you who initiated and supported this process throughout. In particular, I would like to thank Ms. Gabriella Vukovich, the current chair of the Statistical Commission, and the Permanent Mission of Hungary for bringing the draft resolution to the General Assembly as well as the 48 co-sponsors for their support. I also want to thank Ms. Katherine Wallman and Ms. Sibylle von Oppeln-Bronikowski for their leadership of the Friends of the Chair Group. The Group drafted the new preamble and is now working on the implementation guide, which will be considered by the Commission at its upcoming session. I want to thank everyone who has contributed in big or small ways to the success story of the Fundamental Principles: those visionaries who more than 20 years ago drafted ten Principles that have now stood the test of time; chief statisticians that have worked with these Principles on a daily basis and may have had to explain and defend them on many occasions; national statistical offices that have participated in our implementations surveys; delegates that have contributed their time and experience in the Friends of the Chair Group; and many colleagues who have actively supported the ECOSOC and GA endorsement processes over the past few months.

While today marks a very special day for our professional community, our work is of course only just beginning. With the Principles endorsed by the General Assembly, we now have to renew our focus on the implementation of the Principles, especially in the current global context, where statisticians have to continuously respond to new policy challenges. During the upcoming Commission session we have devoted the Monday High Level Forum to proudly commemorate the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Fundamental Principles and their endorsement by the General Assembly. But we will also work hard to review the draft implementation guide that the Friends of the Chair Group is currently finalizing, which will be one important tool to promote full implementation of the Principles.

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The endorsement of the Fundamental Principles by the General Assembly is an historic achievement, which shows how much the global statistical community can achieve when we work together. I am confident that with your continued cooperation the global statistical community will achieve even more in the many challenging areas before us. Thank you again for your support.

Yours sincerely,



Stefan Schweinfest  
Acting Director  
United Nations Statistics Division