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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA

Second Meeting of the Committee
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Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
4-7 September 2001

COUNTRY REPORT

SOMALIA

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Country Report for Somalia

We are happy to be back to the international arena after tens years of absence. We would like to thank the economic Commission for Africa(ECA) for inviting us to this important meeting on Development Information and Decision Making.

As you all aware Somalia was affected from ten years of a tragic civil war that brought considerable suffering that impacted all aspect of life of the society. The entire public institutions that dominated the socio-economic development ceased to function. With this the statistical infrastructure had destroyed in terms of physical structures and institutional set up. Somalia had also lost its national statistical data- base. During the 1990s, in the absence of a national government there were neither institutional structure nor programme activities for the compilation of national statistical data.

In view of this, while we are unable to present a country report with the content and substance outlined by the organiser of the meeting, we would like to present a brief report on statistical activities that were mainly carried out by aid organisations working in Somalia, and the future programmes envisaged for the development of national statistical system by the new Transitional National Government.

During the 1990s, a few and dispersed statistical data was collected and compiled mainly by foreign aid organisations and UN Agencies and regional authorities in several regions of the country. This included baseline household surveys in which household characteristics, income and expenditure data, economic activities as well as availability of and accessibility to health, education services and water and energy were conducted. Some production of agriculture and livestock data, and export and import statistics was also compiled as well as price index in Mogadishu and few other major towns. The aid community; the producer of the data has been the principle user. The regional and local authorities, local NGOs and private sector were also able use to the data

The future development of national statistics. The government is currently engaged in reconstituting the necessary institutional structure for the collection and compilation of critical socio-economic statistical data to monitor the economy and social conditions and for policy formulation of decision making. Preparations are currently being made by the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation to re-establish within its

structure the national statistical agency. The line Ministries are also setting up departments of planning and statistics. Moreover, as Somalia is moving towards a decentralised system of governance in which regions will have extensive power, they will play an important role in collection and compilation of statistical data in various fields on regional and local level with collaboration of the national statistical agency or their own capacity.

As the government has no financial resources of its own the present, it is seeking assistance from the international donors intended to implement statistical programmes.

The government in collaboration with the UNDP, is planning to start to reconstruct the national statistical system with the assistance of the World Bank post-conflict Watch Brief Project. This project will be launched soon to undertake collection and compilation of mainly economic statistical data in these priority areas:

1. consumer Price Index - an Index which is compiled currently by UNDP for Mogadishu and other major towns, utilising outdated weights for the basket of food and services. It is proposed to construct new weights and have the compilation of the indices to cover other major locations in Somalia.
2. Trade statistics - availability of current trade statistics is mostly limited to export and import data from few main ports. These statistics do not provide the origin and destination of trade with the result that the value and volume of trade to Somalia are difficult to estimate, especially for import goods. Export and import data for major items and for the aggregate would be compiled by collecting relevant data from major entry, exit and transit points, would also be counterchecked with trade related statistics.
3. Money and Banking - It is proposed to make initial estimate of the money supply in terms of domestic and foreign currencies in circulation.
4. Government Operations - government budget/income and expenditure disaggregated to the extent possible, will be compiled in compatible format.
5. Sectoral Statistics.
6. Saving and Investment.
7. Other: Volume of remittances, External Debt, International aid.
8. National Accounts - Most of the above statistics and a lot more of additional data are needed to compile the gross domestic product and the national income statistics. A number of sample surveys to cover various sectors of the economy will have to be carried out. The internationally agreed methodology and classifications (UN System of National Accounts, IMF's format and classification on balance of payments and government financial statistics) will be utilised to the extent possible to compile these statistics.
9. Base-line Community-level Socio-economic data:
 - Indicators of basic socio-economic conditions, in particular health, education, water, sanitation, energy
 - Availability and accessibility of socio-economic services
 - Indicators on the socio-economic conditions of the disadvantaged and vulnerable groups
 - Indicators to assess level and extent of poverty
 - Capacity of the local institutions: CSOs and community groups as well as administrations, other development partners and their comparative advantages

This will meet the urgent priority needs of the government and that of the donor community for national statistical data.

Somali government needs the assistance of the regional and international partners to be able to meet the challenge that it faces in rebuilding its national statistical system. Both bilateral and multilateral donors are requested to support Somalia in its efforts in re-establishing an effective national statistical institution.