

Director's Message – March 2019

2019 UNSC meeting and the preparations for ISI WSC 2019 and 2021



March 2019 started with ISI's participation in the United Nations Statistical Commission (UNSC) on 3-8 March in New York. This was a special and festive event due to the 50th anniversary of the UNSC. To highlight this special occasion, a special event with the participation of three past directors of the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) Katherine Wallman, Hermann Habermann, Paul Cheung and the current director Stefan Schweinfest was organized to reflect on the past and future of the UNSC. The ISI published a [contribution](#) about the historic relationship between the ISI and the UNSC.

The UNSC meetings are usually preceded by half a day Forum on Official Statistics on the Monday afternoon. This year, the High Level Forum focused on the Dubai Declaration on the implementation of the Cape Town Global Action Plan (CTGAP) for Sustainable Development Data and its call for the establishment of an innovative funding facility for data. Or to put it more bluntly: where is the money? The Dubai Declaration, which was the outcome of the second World Data Forum, stressed the need of a 'transparent financing mechanism open to all stakeholders, including public and private ones, which allows for financing in terms of both monetary inputs and the provision of in-kind transfers, and allows for openness in combining funding. Another important role of the mechanism is to ensure and maximize the effectiveness of financing for capacity-building'. The High Level Forum provided a platform for donors from official and private sectors and recipients to explore where the funding can be found to make this work. The valuable advice we gained from the discussion was: go where the action is, don't sit behind your desk but put yourself in the middle of the action and activities and liaise with potential funders, either from the private or public sector.

The ISI organized its usual [UNSC side event](#). This year the topic was 'Preparation and Skilling for Official Statistics Careers' with speakers Gabriella Vukovich (KSH Hungary), Steve MacFeely (UNCTAD), Helen MacGillivray (ISI) and Alex Shimuafeni (NSA Namibia), with Haishan Fu (World Bank) as discussant and Ada van Krimpen (ISI) chairperson. The contributions were extremely interesting and the discussion and questions from the floor showed the subject was relevant and timely. In addition, the UNSC provided us with invaluable opportunities to meet with many ISI stakeholders and partners to discuss current and future plans and ideas. The ISI President also chaired the GIST meeting.

At the Permanent Office in The Hague, we are preparing for the [62nd WSC](#) in Kuala Lumpur. In her March President's Message, Helen MacGillivray addresses a number of challenges international organizations are facing in the current political and cultural climate. The motto of the congress is 'Come | Create | Connect' and it will be the focus of the WSC programme and associated events. All who are attending the congress are invited to take part in the [World Stats Run 2019](#) – a special sports event scheduled for the Sunday morning 18 August, the day of the Opening Ceremony. The scientific programme is being put together as we

speak and the short courses programme is already open for registration. The Malaysian hosts are keen on providing the participants with unforgettable memories of Kuala Lumpur and Malaysia.

You will be aware that the [WSC 2021](#) will be organized in The Hague, The Netherlands. The Hague is our hometown and the ISI office is intensively engaged in the organization of this WSC. It is a pleasure and fun to be involved in the decisions about the venue, logo, promotional video and other aspects of organizing such a big event. At the same time, it is also posing new challenges on our small team. The promotional video of the WSC 2021 will be displayed in Kuala Lumpur and the WSC logo inspired by the famous paintings of [Piet Mondrian](#) is now finalized. The Art Museum, hosting the finest overview of Mondrian's work, is next door from the [World Forum](#), where the WSC 2021 is taking place. But first we are all heading for Kuala Lumpur!

Ada van Krimpen
ISI Director