

President's Message – March 2020

Encountering the World of (Official) Statistics

I just returned home after attending my first [United Nations Statistical Commission](#) meetings. The delegates from National Statistical Offices, International and regional Statistical Organisations and Non-Governmental Agencies participated in the UNSC with focus, intensity and engagement. In fact, participants were invited to bring these traits to the World Statistics Congress in 2021.

I was proud to see ISI and IAOS leaders in the delegations and was delighted to talk with Ola Awad, Misha Belkindas, Shigeru Kawasaki, Pali Lahohla, and John Pullinger. ISI Director Ada van Krimpen prepared a full agenda that included our very successful [side event on effective communication of statistics](#) ([my presentation is available online](#)), meetings with leaders of statistical offices

(Palestine, Colombia and Slovenia), the [ISI Committee on Agricultural Statistics](#) (check out their [recent conference in New Delhi](#)) the [UN Global Working Group on Big Data](#), World Bank, African Union, African Development Bank, OECD, UNECA, Esri and many others (apologies for any omissions).

Mark your calendars - the next World Statistics Day (WSD) will be held on 20 October 2020 (#StatsDay2020). I encourage all ISI and association members to start planning now to host an event on World Statistics Day. For example, you might host a student poster competition where they present an analysis of data related to one or more of the [UN Sustainable Development Goals](#) – these goals are intended to “[promote prosperity while protecting the planet](#)”. It would be natural to connect this with the soon-to-be-formally-announced International Year of Women in Statistics and Data Science. I encourage you to connect this WSD event to our professional society – we want to expand the reach of ISI and its associations. This would be a great opportunity for a campaign to recruit new members.

Finally, the impact of COVID-19 was felt at the UNSC meetings with four countries unable to travel and participate. ISI and associations are monitoring WHO, CDC and country-specific recommendations when considering the status of future meetings.

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