



HOW MAY THE FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF OFFICIAL STATISTICS SAFEGUARD INTEGRITY AND INDEPENDENCE?

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The UN Statistical Commission celebrated in 2014 the 20th Anniversary of the Resolution on Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics, a few weeks after the endorsement of these Principles by the UN General Assembly. Since their adoption, all the official statisticians and their stakeholders have progressively become aware of their importance and recognized the professional value of the concepts they had developed. Further many other international or national organizations have adopted recommendations or codes of practice in line with the of Practice; African Union: African Charter for Statistics; France and UK: creation of independent statistical authorities; national codes of practice; etc.). But the UN Resolution remains the Mother of all these initiatives and has contributed to increase the data quality that is an important objective for the whole statistical community, both at international and national levels.

Unfortunately, during the last twenty years, the UN Resolution could not stop several violations of the most basic ethical rules, including in countries once thought safe from such bad practices, or may endanger the independence of official statisticians, in particular the independence of chief statisticians. The paper recalls some of these cases and presents some proposals to safeguard independence of statisticians and integrity of statistics. Some responses to such bad practices may also be organized by statisticians themselves, often through the creation of active professional statistical societies or by using the international network of (, the ISI Advisory Board of Ethics may be essential to support statisticians in trouble or denounce bad practices. Strong links with users and medias are also important. National Statistical Councils represent one important component of the dialogue between producers and users of statistics and should be developed.

The paper also deals some difficulties with the implementation of the UN Resolution, especially when statistical institutions decide to use administrative records to supplement or replace statistical instruments (especially the census) that can be in conflict with the Fundamental Principles.