**61st Session of the World Congress of the International Statistical Institute**

**Marrakech, July 16 – 21, 2017**

**Declaration of the meeting of the Directors-General of the African National Statistical Institutes**

At the joint invitation of the High Commissioner for Planning (HCP) of the Kingdom of Morocco, and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), the  Directors-General of the National Statistical Institutes (NSI) from forty African countries meeting on the sidelines of the 61st Session of the World Congress of the International Statistical Institute ,  organized from 16 - 21 July 2017 in Marrakech in partnership between this Institute and HCP:

* After a thorough exchange of views on the current situation of statistics in Africa  based on experience in their own countries and their common goal to raise this discipline to the required level to support the efforts being made by their countries to achieve lasting economic  prosperity , social welfare and cultural development  of their people;
* Aware of the burning obligation to place  the development  of African countries as part of Agenda 2063 for the development of Africa, the 2030 international agenda for sustainable development and the whole set of the United Nations Framework Conventions on biodiversity, desertification, climate change as well as the Paris Agreement adopted  during the COP21 in 2015, without omitting the reflections held within the framework of the Africa Action Summit of Heads of States held in Marrakech on the margins of COP22 ;
* Measuring the extent of the task that the African National Statistical Institutes must fully assume to fulfill the decisive role statistics play in measuring, monitoring and evaluating a coherent implementation of all the objectives their countries have signed up under these agendas, and to contribute and support achieving them on the agreed due dates and turn them into powerful levers to the building of an endogenous development model in support of regional economic integration;

Express the hope that the High Commissioner for Planning of the Kingdom of Morocco and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa take a joint initiative to organize in Morocco a conference of the Directors-General and Directors of the African National Statistical Institutes in collaboration with all partner institutions involved in the development of Africa. They recommend, while taking into account the mechanisms and statutory arrangements governing ECA and the African Union including the African Commission on Statistics, the meeting of Directors General of the National Statistical Institutes and the African Symposium on Statistical Development (ASSD), to provide for its holding in 2019 and to take advantage of the year 2018 to provide the best conditions for its success.

Express deepest gratitude to his Majesty the King Mohamed VI for granting His patronage to the 61st Session of the World Congress of Statistics and His strong commitment for an updated strategic south-south cooperation framework for Africa's development.

Extend their most heartfelt congratulations to HCP and ISI for the excellent conditions that have led to the convening of the 61st Session of the World Congress in Marrakech and convey their sincere thanks to Mr. Ahmed Lahlimi Alami, High Commissioner for Planning and all his staff for the quality of their reception and for the traditional Moroccan hospitality extended to all participants during our stay in Marrakech.

Take this opportunity to express sincere thanks to all the partners of HCP and ECA which have provided support in many forms to create the conditions necessary for holding this meeting and are delighted to particularly mention: The Moroccan Phosphate Company (OCP), The African Development Bank (ADB) and the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA).