

**Closing Remarks by Deputy Director-General responsible for Social
& Population Statistics at Statistics SA, Ms Kefiloe Masiteng,
Closing Ceremony of the 5th ISibalo Conference of African Young
Statisticians, Held in Pretoria, 13-17 June 2016**

Program Director

Members of Stats SA Management;

Representatives of Pan-African Institutions;

Statistics Elders, Professor Kiregyera & Dr Ajayi;

Representatives of National, African & International Institutions of Higher Learning & Research;

Africa's Young Statisticians;

Distinguished Guests;

Ladies and Gentlemen

We have reached the end of the conference. We have also reached the beginning of the next step forward.

It is my honour this afternoon to make a few remarks as we close the 5th ISibalo Conference of African Young Statisticians. I must first congratulate all of you for the hard work you have put in the past six months and in this week alone. Many of you gave posters and oral presentations on key demographic challenges that affect the African continent; paramount is the question of whether Africa can harness the demographic dividend in pursuit of national priorities and sustainable development goals.

Program Director;

It is also my pleasure to have been part of this conference and remain a part of this programme that seeks to build statistical capacity of young people, especially this week when we both mourn young lives lost on 16th June 1976, but celebrate the change they catalysed.

Eight years since the first gathering of African young statisticians, we Stats SA have taken note of the draft work programme you have developed and the resolutions adopted by a new crop of young statisticians whose focus will be the production, analysis and dissemination of population data for a more informed evidence-based platform for national, African and international monitoring of developing.

Our minister in the Presidency, on Wednesday, already made reference to how sustainable investments in Africa's young statisticians will unleash a demographic dividend of inclusive, sustainable economic growth in many countries and a creation of a cohort of skilled capacity to sustain the evidence-base for Africa's post-2015 development. He called on Statistics SA, its partners and all institutions present at this conference to deliberate on a sustainable funding and collaborative model for the African Young Statisticians Programme, for this dividend to pay off.

Distinguished Guests;

I am pleased to say, my office, working with programme directors of the ISIBALO African Young Statistician Programme, and coincidentally, also the team working on the 28th International Population Conference next year, which I oversee, will ensure that the resolutions of this conference are made a reality.

Ladies and Gentlemen;

South Africa will be releasing the results of the Community Survey 2016 soon. I invite South African young statisticians present today to delve deeper into this dataset, and as your contribution to your country chapter activities, to prepare working papers based on the Community Survey data. These challenges I throw to other countries present as well, to go back home, set your country chapter agenda and work program – and let us see where we can harmonise our work.

Program Director;

I am looking forward to meeting these young statisticians in Tunisia later this year and to receive the proposal they will table at the 12th ASSD on how they will work on the 2020

round of population & housing censuses, the SDG framework and the 28th International Conference. Notwithstanding the challenges you will face in mainstreaming your programme into the ASSD and country programmes, you are assured of my utmost support.

Ladies and Gentlemen;

As I close this 5th ISibalo Conference of African Young Statisticians, let me thank all young statisticians of the 16 guest countries present today. I also thank the professoriate and panel of experts who have willingly agreed to walk this journey with Africa's young statisticians. Let me thank Team South Africa young statisticians for the amazing job you did – I am assured I have a team of young demographers and statisticians who will take Stats SA forward.

Finally I thank officials of Stats SA and the ISibalo and IUSSP team who worked tirelessly for the success of this conference and the continuity of this programme.

African Young Statisticians;

It is on this note that I wish you fruitful deliberations going forward, safe travel back home and I hope that what we started this week will gain the momentum we need to see as we all commit to the post-2015 development agenda. I officially declare this conference opened.

I thank you.

Ms Kefiloe Masiteng

Deputy Director-General for Social & Population Statistics

Statistics SA

17 June 2016