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To: Members of the Executive Board
From: The Acting Secretary
Subject: **The Special Data Dissemination Standard - Update**

Attached for the information of Executive Directors is a further update on the status of the Special Data Dissemination Standard (SDDS).

As agreed by Executive Directors, the opening of the Dissemination Standards Bulletin Board (DSBB) to the public is to be the first public availability of the list of countries that have subscribed to the SDDS. The press briefing is scheduled to be held at 11:00 a.m. on Thursday, September 5, 1996 in the Board Room.

The DSBB will be demonstrated "on line" for Executive Directors at 3:00 p.m. on Tuesday, September 3, 1996 in the Board Room, with a supplementary demonstration at 9:00 a.m. on Thursday, September 5, if requested.

Mrs. Carson (ext. 37952) is available to answer technical or factual questions relating to this paper.

Att: (1)

Other Distribution:
Department Heads

INTERNATIONAL MONETARY FUND

The Special Data Dissemination Standard--Update

Prepared by the Statistics and the
Policy Development and Review Departments

Approved by John B. McLenaghan and Jack Boorman

August 14, 1996

1. This paper provides a further update on the status of the Special Data Dissemination Standard (SDDS), which was opened for subscription by members following the Executive Board's approval in March 1996.¹ The dissemination standards bulletin board (DSBB), on which subscribing members' metadata (information about the data disseminated and dissemination practices) are to be posted, is slated to open on the Internet in three weeks.
2. To assist countries in deciding whether to subscribe to the SDDS and/or in preparing metadata, Fund staff conducted seminar-workshops in Geneva, Bangkok, and Santiago in late June and early July. These week-long seminars were attended by 52 countries, with a total of 150 representatives from central banks, national statistical offices, and other statistics-producing agencies. The format of the seminars provided opportunity for the participants to discuss with the staff their individual country situations, an opportunity which they found very valuable.
3. Members' subscriptions, which are by letter to the Fund's Secretary, have continued to come in. As of August 14, thirty-two countries have subscribed, as listed below.

Argentina ²	Finland	Lithuania	Slovenia
Australia	France	Mexico ²	South Africa
Belgium	Hungary	Netherlands	Sweden
Canada	Iceland	Norway	Switzerland
Chile	Ireland	Peru	Thailand
Colombia	Israel	Philippines	Turkey
Croatia	Italy	Poland	United Kingdom
Denmark	Japan	Singapore	United States

¹An earlier update, in SM/96/153 (June 26, 1996), reviewed developments since the April 22, 1996 meeting of the Interim Committee, including the completion of the module of the *Guide to the Data Dissemination Standards* describing the SDDS, the proposed presentation of three regional seminar-workshops about the SDDS in June-July, work on the DSBB, and planning of work toward the General Data Dissemination Standard.

²The staff has been informed that a formal letter of subscription will be forthcoming within a few days.

4. Almost all of these thirty-two countries have also provided the metadata called for under the SDDS. The staff is reviewing these metadata for comprehensiveness and international comparability in preparation for posting them on the DSBB.³ The expectation is that metadata received by August 9 will be reviewed by the staff and the country's final approval secured in time for the DSBB's opening. For subscribers providing metadata after August 9, the staff will make every effort so that the metadata appear on the DSBB when it opens. When an initial staff review of submissions received after August 9 clearly indicates that the metadata can be expected to be ready by mid-September, a notation will be made on the DSBB that the country has subscribed to the SDDS and that its metadata will be posted soon.

5. At EBM/96/36 (April 12, 1996), the Board agreed that the DSBB would be opened to the public on August 31, assuming that a critical mass of subscribers with a mix of developing and developed countries had been achieved. The staff considers that the current state of subscriptions meets the goal. The fully functional DSBB will be previewed within the Fund on the first working day after that date (September 3). An on-line demonstration for Executive Directors will be provided on that day (and, if needed, a second demonstration will be provided on September 5) in the Board Room. The public opening of the DSBB will take place at a press briefing on Thursday, September 5.

6. The DSBB's opening will be supported by an outreach program designed to make this service being provided by the Fund widely known. Demonstrations of the DSBB, to which market participants and other potential users of the DSBB will be invited, will be held during the week following the DSBB's opening in several major financial centers. Documentation on the SDDS in the form of an attractive brochure is being prepared and it will be made available to market participants as well as to countries that wish to distribute it to their own data users. An on-line demonstration will also take place on a continuous basis at the Annual Meetings site. Finally, as part of the Fund-Bank seminar program at the Annual Meetings, the staff is hosting a workshop on the standards initiative, focusing on its role in promoting sound economic policies and the smooth functioning of the markets.

³The earlier update to the Executive Board noted that, in anticipation of a heavy workload in readying metadata for the DSBB, the staff would not be able to assure members that metadata submitted after August 9 could be readied in time for the bulletin board's scheduled opening. This point was also made at the three regional seminars.