Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 26 February 2015

[without reference to a Main Committee (A/69/L.53 and Add.1)]

69/266. A global geodetic reference frame for sustainable development

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations,

Reaffirming also its resolution 54/68 of 6 December 1999, in which it endorsed the resolution entitled “The Space Millennium: Vienna Declaration on Space and Human Development”, which included, inter alia, key actions to improve the efficiency and security of transport, search and rescue, geodesy and other activities by promoting the enhancement of, universal access to and compatibility of space-based navigation and positioning systems, including Global Navigation Satellite systems,

Reaffirming further its resolution 57/253 of 20 December 2002, in which it endorsed the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg Plan of Implementation), and means of implementation, which included, inter alia, strengthening cooperation and coordination among global observing systems and research programmes for integrated global observations, taking into account the need for building capacity and sharing of data from ground-based observations, satellite remote sensing and other sources among all countries,

Reaffirming its resolution 66/288 of 27 July 2012, in which it endorsed the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, entitled “The future we want”, in which Heads of State and Government recognized the importance of space-technology-based data, in situ monitoring and reliable geospatial information for sustainable development policymaking, programming and project operations,

Noting Economic and Social Council resolution 2011/24 of 27 July 2011, by which the Council established the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management, encouraged Member States to hold regular high-level,

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multi-stakeholder discussions on global geospatial information, including through
the convening of global forums, with a view to promoting a comprehensive dialogue
with all relevant actors and bodies, and emphasized the importance of promoting
national, regional and global efforts to foster the exchange of knowledge and
expertise, to assist developing countries in building and strengthening national
capacities in that field.

Noting also resolution 1, adopted on 1 November 2012 by the Nineteenth
United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for Asia and the Pacific, held in
Bangkok from 29 October to 1 November 2012,3 in which the Conference, realizing
the need to improve the sustainability and capability of the Global Geodetic
Observing System and the need to encourage and support the adoption of the
International Terrestrial Reference Frame as the foundation reference frame, urged
the Committee of Experts to consult with Member States to adopt and sustain the
global geodetic reference frame and provide a road map for its implementation, and
to participate in and make commitments to the Global Geodetic Observing System
to ensure its long-term sustainability,

Noting further decision 3/102, adopted by the Committee of Experts on
26 July 2013,4 in which the Committee agreed that actions should be taken to
facilitate the submission of a resolution to be tabled at the sixty-eighth session of
the General Assembly in order to seek support and commitment at the highest level,
and requested the Secretariat to establish a working group, with equitable regional
representation, to develop the conceptual note and draft text of the resolution
through an open and inclusive process,

Recognizing the importance of international cooperation, as no one country
can do this alone, to realize the global geodetic reference frame and services to
underpin Global Navigation Satellite Systems technology and provide the framework
for all geospatial activity, as a key enabler of spatial data interoperability, disaster
mitigation and sustainable development,

Recognizing also the economic and scientific importance of and the growing
demand for an accurate and stable global geodetic reference frame for the Earth that
allows the interrelationship of measurements taken anywhere on the Earth and in
space, combining geometric positioning and gravity field-related observations, as
the basis and reference in location and height for geospatial information, which is
used in many Earth science and societal applications, including sea-level and
climate change monitoring, natural hazard and disaster management and a whole
series of industrial applications (including mining, agriculture, transport, navigation
and construction) in which precise positioning introduces efficiencies,

Recognizing further the extraordinary achievements made by national mapping
and space agencies, geodetic commissions, research organizations and universities
and other international organizations such as the International Federation of
Surveyors, building upon initiatives of the International Association of Geodesy,
representing the global geodetic community, in measuring and monitoring changes
in the Earth’s system on a best-effort basis, including the development of the now
adopted International Terrestrial Reference Frame,

\[\text{3 See E/CONF.102/8, chap. IV, sect. B.}\]
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Recognizing the investments of Member States in developing satellite missions for positioning and remote sensing of the Earth, supporting a range of scientific endeavours that improve our understanding of the “Earth system” and underpin decision-making, and recognizing that the full societal benefits of these investments are realized only if they are referenced to a common global geodetic reference frame at the national, regional and global levels,

Recognizing with appreciation that some Member States are already implementing open geodetic data-sharing mechanisms for the benefit of realizing, improving and accessing the global geodetic reference frame at the national, regional and global levels,

Acknowledging that the global geodetic reference frame depends upon the participation of countries all around the globe, and the need to take action to strengthen international cooperation,

1. Notes with appreciation the establishment of a working group by the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management to develop a global geodetic road map that addresses key elements relating to the development and sustainability of the global geodetic reference frame;

2. Encourages Member States and relevant international organizations to enhance global cooperation in providing technical assistance, especially for capacity development in geodesy for developing countries, with the aim of ensuring the development, sustainability and advancement of the global geodetic reference frame;

3. Urges Member States to implement open sharing of geodetic data, standards and conventions, on a voluntary basis, to contribute to the global reference frame and regional densifications through relevant national mechanisms and intergovernmental cooperation, and in coordination with the International Association of Geodesy;

4. Invites Member States to commit to improving and maintaining appropriate national geodetic infrastructure as an essential means to enhance the global geodetic reference frame;

5. Also invites Member States to engage in multilateral cooperation that addresses infrastructure gaps and duplications towards the development of a more sustainable global geodetic reference frame;

6. Further invites Member States to develop outreach programmes that make the global geodetic reference frame more visible and understandable to society.

80th plenary meeting
26 February 2015