

OPENING ADDRESS
Third High Level Forum on United Nations
Global Geospatial Information Management

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Honorable UN Under-Secretary-General Mr. Wu Hongbo,
Honorable Ministers,
Dear Colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good morning.

Today we are opening the Third High Level Forum on United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM), jointly organized by the UN-GGIM Committee of Experts and the National Administration of Surveying, Mapping and Geoinformation (NASG). First of all, I am delighted to offer my sincere congratulations on this Forum. I wish to extend a warm welcome to all the guests present at the Forum!

As a well-known ancient Chinese poem says, distance cannot keep us apart. The world today is witnessing a trend towards economic globalization, multi-polarization, and wider ICT application across society. The imaginary scenario in the poem has turned into reality. We share a common fate on this shared planet. Sustainable development has emerged as a global issue that has a bearing on the fate of humanity as a whole.

Sustainable development has been widely embraced and has become a basic policy adopted by governments around the world and the international community since it was officially proposed at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in 1992. The three pillars of sustainable development, i.e. economic, social, environmental, are all closely associated with geospatial information. Therefore, the supporting role of geospatial information for sustainable development has become increasingly pronounced. As science and technology evolve, using geospatial information to support sustainable development has become a common understanding and an entry point for transformation and development of geospatial information authorities.

As the international community is setting the Sustainable Development Goals and the Post-2015 Development Agenda, this High Level Forum with the theme ‘Sustainable Development with Geospatial Information’ is well-timed, well-targeted and practical. With this theme, we will share forward-looking ideas and best practices on how to use geospatial information to support, measure and monitor sustainable development. We will explore new strategies, technologies and approaches to support global and regional sustainable development with geospatial information. In so doing, we will make joint contribution to helping keep mother Earth beautiful, which I think is of enormous significance.

Dear Friends, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Chinese government has attached much importance to geospatial information. In recent years, we have worked to implement the development strategy of building geospatial framework for Smart China, monitoring national geographical conditions, expanding the geospatial industry and turning China into a leading country in geoinformation. We position ourselves as a trustworthy provider of geoinformation services and a robust booster for the geospatial industry. Historic strides forward have been made in the sector of geospatial information in China.

The BeiDou Navigation Satellite System has started to provide services across the Asia-Pacific Region. We have launched our first civilian high-resolution stereo mapping satellite ZY3. A Ground-Sea-Air-Space integrated Earth observation system is taking shape in China. We have significantly improved our capabilities in real-time capture, automatic processing, and networked service of geospatial information. Geoinformation has found increasingly wider applications across society. We have launched our national geoportal of Map World. We have contributed to the efforts to build digital cities and smart cities across the country. We have provided strong support for the implementation of key national and local strategies and projects, eco-environmental protection and emergency disaster response.

China’s State Council has issued its *Guidelines on Promoting the Development of the Geospatial Industry*, which has established the geospatial industry as one of the country’s Emerging Strategic Industries. The National Geoinformation Industrial Park has been constructed and become operational. For a number of years, China’s geospatial industry has been developing at an annual growth rate above 20%. The prospects for the industry are very bright.

Dear Friends, Ladies and Gentlemen,

As a responsible large developing nation, China has always taken sustainable development seriously. We have set a clear and comprehensive agenda for progress on five fronts - economic, political, cultural, social and ecological. Conservation culture has been put more prominently on the agenda. Currently, China is quickening the pace of developing a regime for conservation culture. We are striving to improve the institutions regarding spatial development of land, efficient resource utilization, eco-environmental protection. We are working to foster a new modernization dynamic in which man and nature evolve in harmony. All this requires accurate data on physical and human geography elements. That is the intended purpose of the country's first National Geographical Condition Census, which is now a high priority for us. This Census was launched at the beginning of last year and is scheduled to be completed by the end of 2015. We hope that this Census will produce across-the-board information on spatial distribution and major characteristics of natural and human geography features. The findings are expected to shed light on the geospatially inherent relationships among resources, environment, population, economy and society. Such results will contribute to the country's success on the front of conservation culture. This initiative is both trail-blazing and highly challenging. We hope to be enlightened by the best practices shared by other countries at this High-level Forum. What we learn here will make us more competent in carrying out the Census and subsequent continuous monitoring.

Dear Friends, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The international community has a shared responsibility for achieving sustainable development. One month ago, on the occasion of the UN Climate Summit, Mr. Zhang Gaoli, Vice Premier of China, on behalf of the Chinese Government, donated to the United Nations the 30-meter Global Land Cover Datasets (GlobeLand30), which was developed under the leadership of NASG. UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon appreciated the Chinese Government's information-sharing initiative by saying that data could help better understand, monitor and manage changes in global land cover and land use. He described the donation as timely and precious. These datasets will be freely available to the Member States, the UN system and the international community. We sincerely welcome extensive applications of these datasets by countries around the world. We also expect international cooperation in the data maintenance, update and information mining, so as to make the datasets a common contribution from geospatial information professionals to global sustainable development.

Dear Friends, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Global geospatial information management capacity development is of great significance for global sustainable development. The Chinese Government has

always been supportive to UN-GGIM. We have been actively involved in international exchange and cooperation in the field of geospatial information. We have worked to assist in enhancing global geospatial information management capacity. In 2012, a Trust Fund was created at the UN with donation from the Chinese Government. The initiative is intended to develop geospatial information management capacity in China and other developing countries. The Chinese Government, in close collaboration with the UN, has organized a series of capacity-building activities. NASG will, as always, continue to participate in and support the UN-GGIM's agenda.

Dear Friends, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Today's China considers itself and its neighbors and the world at large as "overlapping communities of fate". Mr. Xi Jinping, President of China, has stressed that "the Chinese dream that we desire to fulfill not only benefits the people of China, but also the people of all the other countries". Latitude and longitude lines have closely interwoven the dreams of development in China, the other countries and the world. Let us jointly shoulder the responsibility of achieving Sustainable Development with Geospatial Information, and cooperate widely and deeply with a view to opening up a bright future for the human society.

I wish this High Level Forum a full success. I wish all the participants good health and pleasant stay in China. Thank you.