

Subcommittee on Geodesy Governance Position Paper

Introduction

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Photo: D.Høgvard



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- 1865 - The International Telegraph Union (The International Telecommunication Union, ITU, from 1932)
- 1875 - The Metre Convention. The International Bureau of Weights and Measures
- 1884 - The International Meridian Conference
- 1912 - The International Time Bureau
- 1963 - Coordinated Universal Time (UTC) adopted by ITU
- 1967 - The definition of the second based on atomic radiation
- 1987 - The International Earth Rotation and Reference Systems Service (IERS)



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Defining appropriate governance arrangements for the global geodetic reference frame

Governance focus group lead: Laila Løvhoïden
(Norway)



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Geodetic observatory, Oslo



Photo: Jiri Havran



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The Royal Palace, Oslo



Photo: Trond Isaksen



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Struve Geodetic Arc



Photo: www.norgesverdensarv.no, Struve Geodetic Arc



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Governance mechanisms GGRF vs IGO's

Intergovernmental Organisation (IGO)		Governance equivalent GGRF
Congress	✓	UN-GGIM Committee of Experts
Governing board	✓	Subcommittee on Geodesy
Executive committee	✓	Can be established by changing the Terms of Reference
Secretariat	✓	Some secretarial support
Working groups	✓	5 Working groups are in place (focus groups)
Scientific committees	✓	IAG, FIG
Mission, vision, strategic plan	✓	GGRF Resolution, Roadmap, Implementation Plan
Intergovernmental commitment		None
Funding		None



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Commitment is key

- UN General Assembly resolution A/RES/69/266) calls for commitment
- The GGRF road map calls for commitment
- The GGRF implementation plan calls for commitment



Photo: Kyoung-Soo Eom



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Well proven tool

- Treaties and international conventions are much-used tools to facilitate and regulate intergovernmental commitment
- The Secretary-General of the United Nations is the depositary of more than 560 multilateral treaties,



Photo: Andrick Lal, SPC, Fiji



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Voluntary basis

- Nations sign and agree to international conventions on a voluntary basis
- Only a minor number of nations need to agree on a convention for it to be valid



Photo: Anne Jørgensen



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Questions of principle

- A convention can be UN-driven or non-UN driven
- A convention may or may not have economic, legislative or administrative implications
- A convention can be very ambitious from the start and encompass all matters dealt with, or it can be simple and principle based
- Protocols can be attached to a convention when it is written or added at a later stage



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Principle based overhead convention

The investigation suggests:

- A principle based overhead convention with no economic implications
 - Easier to negotiate, administer and operate
 - Allows nations to develop in the area of geodesy in its own pace and manner
- Protocols added at a later stage:
 - protocols for data sharing
 - protocols for maintaining national infrastructure
 - protocols for education training and capacity building
 - protocols for filling infrastructure gaps
 - etc



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Positive impact outside the GGRF

- Successful establishment of such a convention will clearly demonstrate the importance of UN-GGIM and the UN-GGIM decisiveness and ability to act.
- It will likely raise the awareness and profile of geospatial data in general.



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Establish a GGRF Trust fund

- Will enable more developing nations to access the GGRF
- Trust fund to be administered by the UN
- Member States donate to GGRF-purpose of their choice
- Measures that needs funding are (not restricted to):
 - Build GGRF infrastructure in developing countries to boost prosperity
 - Supporting GGRF education, training and capacity building measures for countries in need
 - To cover travel expenses to SCoG meetings for experts from developing Member States
 - To strengthen the GGRF governance structure by funding secretarial resources to the SCoG
 - To cover expenses for hosting the official SCoG meeting
 - To support GGRF communication and outreach measures in accordance with the recommendations in the implementation plan



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Encourage Member States take responsibility

Dedicated resources needed to:

1. Lead the investigation a GGRF convention
2. Lead the investigation and planning of a GGRF trust fund



Photo: Bjørn-Owe Holmberg



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Position paper conclusions

1. To start an investigation regarding the establishment of a GGRF UN-convention to enable Member States to commit to the development and sustainability of the GGRF in accordance with the UN General Assembly Resolution (A/RES/69/266) and the GGRF Roadmap recommendations.
2. To initiate the establishment of a UN GGRF trust fund to support and promote Member State activities that contributes to realizing the intention of (A/RES/69/266) and the GGRF roadmap
3. To investigate the future need for a professional operations organisation for the GGRF, and if an existing geodetic organisation can evolve to become this organisation.
4. To strengthen the subcommittee on Geodesy as a governance arrangement for the GGRF by revising the subcommittee Terms of Reference.



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Towards sustainability



Photo: Bjørn-Owe Holmberg



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