



UN-GGIM
UNITED NATIONS
COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS ON
GLOBAL GEOSPATIAL
INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

Third United Nations World Geospatial Information Congress

Navigating the Next Frontier: Embracing the Digital Renaissance and a New Geospatial Paradigm

The Ritz-Carlton, Jeddah,

16 – 19 November 2025

Kingdom of Saudi Arabia,



INFORMATION NOTE

(as of 17 March 2026)

Convened by:

United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management

Organized by:

**United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
Statistics Division, Global Geospatial Information Management Section**

Supported and hosted by:

**General Authority for Survey and Geospatial Information
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia**

<https://ggim.un.org/3unwgic/>

https://ggim.un.org/3UNWGIC/call_for_abstracts



UN-GGIM

United Nations Committee of Experts on
Global Geospatial Information Management

Positioning geospatial information to address global challenges

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INTRODUCTION

The United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), as the secretariat for the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM), will organize the **Third United Nations World Geospatial Information Congress (3rd UNWGIC)**. The 3rd UNWGIC, convened by the Committee of Experts, hosted and supported by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia through its General Authority for Survey and Geospatial Information (GEOSA), will bring together the global geospatial information community and stakeholders, navigating the next frontier, embracing the digital renaissance, reimagining humanity's application of integrated geospatial knowledge, information and infrastructure with a new geospatial paradigm for the collective good and foster a future-ready geospatial ecosystem.

The 3rd UNWGIC will convene under the theme "**Navigating the Next Frontier: Embracing the Digital Renaissance and a New Geospatial Paradigm**" that will serve as a high-level, multi-stakeholder global platform for Member States, international organizations, the private sector, academia, and civil society to strengthen global collaboration, co-create geospatially enabled solutions for global to local impact.

The convening of the 3rd UNWGIC arises out of the mandate from the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations (ECOSOC) to the Committee of Experts, a subsidiary body of ECOSOC, to convene global forums that promote comprehensive dialogue on global geospatial information management with all governments, relevant international organizations, non-governmental organizations, academia and the private sector. In making Decision 15/101 and 15/116 at its fifteenth session from 6 – 8 August 2025, the Committee of Experts welcomed the offer from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia through its General Authority for Survey and Geospatial Information to host the Third United Nations World Geospatial Information Congress from 16 – 19 November 2026.

The Congress is expected to be an open, participatory and inclusive event with over 1200 participants, aiming to enhance the understanding and inspire applications and actions to usher in a future-ready geospatial ecosystem. The Congress is the Committee of Expert's flagship event, its global platform that serves as an inclusive and participatory forum for governments, the private sector, academia, civil society, and international organizations to deliberate enhancing global geospatial information management arrangements and to progress toward a geospatial ecosystem where the effective application of geospatial information, knowledge and insights enables meaningful global to local impact.

PROGRAM OUTLINE

The main program of the 3rd UNWGIC will span four days, from 16 – 19 November 2026. In addition to the main program, in-person meetings can be expected on 14 – 15 November 2026, primarily involving the meeting of the Bureau of the Committee of Experts and its expanded bureau, regional committees, as well as the Congress Coordinating Committee and the International Advisory Committee of the 3rd UNWGIC. Participants should plan their travel and availability accordingly to accommodate these governance and preparatory meetings.



The initial outline for the 3rd UNWGIC main program from 16 to 19 November 2026 is as follows:

Monday 16 November 2026	Tuesday 17 November 2026	Wednesday 18 November 2026	Thursday 19 November 2026
Official Opening Ceremony			
Keynote Sessions			
Plenary Sessions and Panels			
Parallel and Thematic Sessions and Panels			
Closing Ceremony			

DATES AND VENUE

The 3rd UNWGIC will be held from 16 – 19 November 2026 at The Ritz-Carlton Jeddah, Southern Corniche District, Al Hamra, Jeddah 21493, Saudi Arabia. The chosen venue will provide state-of-the-art facilities for the official sessions, plenary sessions, parallel thematic tracks, exhibitions, and side events, enabling participants to engage in an engaging, collaborative, and forward-looking global event. GEOSA, in close coordination with UNSD, will provide appropriate logistical guidance for international participants, including information on visa procedures and entry requirements as well as the range of accommodation options available.

The 3rd UNWGIC is an in-person event with no virtual participation component.



LANGUAGE

The working language of the 3rd UNWGIC is English.

REGISTRATION

Registration for the 3rd UNWGIC is free and involves a simple two-step process to confirm your participation.

The 3rd UNWGIC is open to a diverse group of participants including leaders, innovators, researchers, educators, practitioners, and users from all stakeholder groups, including from governments, non-governmental organizations, international and regional organizations, international and regional geospatial societies, academia and research institutions, the private sector and industry, and civil society.

- Interested participants must first submit a request to participate in the 3rd UNWGIC online.
- Each request will be reviewed by the Secretariat for the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management.
- Upon favorable consideration, interested participants will be advised by e-mail to proceed to the second step, to register as a Congress participant online.
- After full registration as a participant is completed, a confirmation of participation letter will be sent to the registered email address, which can also be used as a support letter for visa application purposes.
- Registered participant may also request for a separate letter of support for visa application purposes.

Note:

Registration has not yet opened. We encourage prospective participants to check the [3rd UNWGIC website](#) regularly. The online registration link will be announced separately once it becomes available.

On-Site Registration

Participants must first complete the online registration process, after which a confirmation of participation will be issued. To finalize on-site registration, dedicated counters will be available at the venue starting one day before the Congress opens and throughout the duration of the Congress. At these counters, participants should present their confirmation of participation letter and valid identification to receive their event badge and materials.

Moderators, presenters, and panelists are kindly requested to identify themselves during the on-site registration process, basically to “check-in” and ensure they receive any additional instructions, session details, and materials related to their roles.

VISA AND ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Participants traveling to Saudi Arabia must ensure they meet all entry and visa requirements prior to arrival. Saudi Arabia offers several visa options depending on nationality, purpose of the visit, and duration of stay. Citizens of eligible countries may apply for a tourist e-visa online via the Saudi Unified National Visa Platform. The e-visa typically allows for multiple entries and stays of up to 90 days within a one-year validity period. All travelers must hold a passport valid for at least six months and may be required to present proof of accommodation, return or onward travel, and approved medical insurance.

Participants are strongly advised to consult the official platforms or the nearest Saudi Arabian consular mission for the latest entry requirements, visa regulations and application procedures.

ACCOMMODATION

Participants are responsible for arranging their own accommodation for the duration of their stay in Jeddah. The choice of lodging is entirely at their discretion, and reservations must be made directly with the selected establishments. To assist with planning, a list of suggested hotels will be provided. These options include properties near the venue as well as within convenient commuting distance by public transportation, offering options and ease of access.

Accommodation options

In addition to the venue, the Ritz-Carlton Jeddah, the list of suitable alternative accommodation options has been compiled for participants consideration.

<i>Establishment</i>	<i>Category</i>	<i>Approximate distance from the venue</i>
InterContinental Hotels Jeddah, an IHG hotel	5 Star	1.1 Km
Radisson Blu Hotel, Jeddah Al Hamra	5 Star	2.7 Km
Movenpick Hotel Tahlia Jeddah	5 Star	4.0 Km
Waldorf Astoria Jeddah - Qasr Al Sharq by Hilton	5 Star	14 Km
Prime Hotel Al Hamra Jeddah	4 Star	1.4 Km
Taj Jeddah Hotel Apartment	4 Star	2.8 Km
Novotel Jeddah Tahlia	4 Star	5.3 Km
Adagio Aparthotel Jeddah Malik Road	4 Star	13 Km

DINING AND LOCAL SERVICES

Jeddah offers a wide range of dining options, from international cuisine to traditional Saudi dishes. Many restaurants are family-friendly and observe prayer breaks. Pharmacies and convenience stores are easily accessible near hotels and the venue. Alcohol is prohibited, and pork products are not available.

CURRENCY AND BANKING

The official currency in Saudi Arabia is the Saudi Riyal (SAR). ATMs are widely available throughout the city, including at the airport, major hotels, and shopping centers, and they accept most international debit and credit cards. Credit cards are commonly used in hotels, restaurants, and larger retail outlets, though smaller shops and local markets may prefer cash. It is advisable to carry some local currency for incidental expenses. Mobile payment apps such as Mada Pay, Apple Pay, and STC Pay are increasingly popular and accepted at many establishments, offering a convenient alternative to cash and cards. Google Pay is expected to be introduced soon but may not be fully available by November 2026, so travelers should not rely on it as their primary payment method. International travelers should notify their banks before departure to avoid card usage issues and confirm any foreign transaction fees.

TRANSPORTATION

The main airport in Jeddah is King Abdulaziz International Airport. Its IATA code is JED, and it is located about 21 kilometers from the city center. It serves as the primary gateway for Jeddah and is the second busiest airport in Saudi Arabia.

From Airport to hotels or venue

For travels from King Abdulaziz International Airport to your hotels or the venue, taxis and ride-hailing services such as Uber and Careem are readily available, and many hotels provide private airport transfers upon request. Alternatively, the SAPTCO Airport Express bus offers a budget-friendly route to the city center, where a short taxi ride can complete your trip.

From hotels to the venue

For travel between your hotel and the venue, taxis and ride-hailing services are readily available and recommended. Allow extra time during peak traffic hours for road travel.

Getting around Jeddah

Jeddah is a sprawling city where private cars are the most common mode of transport, but visitors have options. Taxis and ride-hailing services like Uber and Careem are widely available and reliable for point-to-point travel. For those who prefer driving, car rentals are easy to arrange at the airport and in the city. Keep in mind that traffic can be heavy during peak hours, so plan extra time for your journeys.

COMMUNICATIONS - MOBILE TELEPHONES AND INTERNET

Jeddah offers excellent mobile and internet connectivity. International visitors can use roaming services, as most global providers have agreements with local carriers such as STC, Mobily, and Zain, ensuring seamless coverage. However, roaming charges can be high, so it is advisable to check rates or activate an international package before traveling. For longer stays or to save on cost, purchasing a local SIM card or eSIM is recommended. These are available at the airport and major retail outlets with passport verification.

High-speed 4G and expanding 5G networks provide reliable coverage across the city, and Wi-Fi is widely available in hotels, cafes, and public spaces. Popular messaging and calling apps like WhatsApp and Zoom work without restrictions, though some VoIP services may be limited. Ensure your phone is unlocked for local SIM use and download essential apps before arrival.

TIME ZONE

Jeddah operates on Arabia Standard Time (AST), UTC+3, throughout the year, with no daylight-saving time adjustments. This means the local time remains consistent, three hours ahead of Coordinated Universal Time (UTC). Visitors should plan accordingly when scheduling international calls or meetings.

WEATHER

November in Jeddah is generally mild and pleasant, with average daytime highs around 32°C (89°F) and cooler evenings near 22°C (71°F). Rainfall is minimal, and skies are mostly clear, making it an excellent time to visit. Light layers are recommended, breathable clothing for daytime warmth, and a light jacket or sweater for cooler nights. Comfortable shoes and sunglasses are useful for outdoor activities.

HEALTH, SAFETY AND INSURANCE

Participants are responsible for ensuring they have received all necessary inoculations and vaccinations prior to travel, in accordance with international health requirements and advisories, and any specific requirements of the host country. In addition, participants must secure comprehensive insurance coverage for the full duration of their travel and stay in Saudi Arabia. This includes, but is not limited to, health, hospitalization, medical treatment and evacuation, travel, and life insurance. All associated costs and premiums are the sole responsibility of the participants. The organizers do not assume responsibility for any illness, injury, or medical condition that may arise during travel to, from, or during the stay in the host country.

To ensure a safe and healthy meeting environment, all prevailing public health measures and regulations issued by the local government at the time of the 3rd UNWGIC will apply and must be adhered to by all participants.

Emergency information

Saudi Arabia is safe for visitors, but standard precautions are advised. Emergency services can be reached by dialing 999 for police, 997 for ambulance, and 998 for civil defense. The venue will have its own safety and security protocols, and participants should carry identification at all times. Follow local guidance and avoid restricted areas.

ELECTRICITY

Jeddah uses 230V electricity at 60Hz, and the standard plug type is Type G (three rectangular pins). Travelers from regions using different plug types will need an adapter, and in some cases, a voltage converter if their devices are not rated for 230V. Many hotels now provide multi-standard sockets, adding convenience for international participants. Additionally, USB charging ports may be available in hotel rooms and at the airport, but carrying a universal travel adapter remains recommended for flexibility when charging devices in various locations.



CULTURAL ETIQUETTE

Saudi Arabia observes Islamic traditions, and visitors should respect local customs. Modest dress is expected in public spaces. Men should avoid shorts, and women should wear loose-fitting clothing that covers arms and legs, though head covering is not mandatory for foreign visitors. Public displays of affection should be avoided. Alcohol is strictly prohibited. Prayer times are observed throughout the day, and some businesses may close briefly during these periods. Photography of government buildings, military sites, and individuals without consent is discouraged. Always greet with courtesy and avoid sensitive topics related to religion or politics in conversation.

POINTS OF CONTACT

Registration and administrative matters	<p>Ms. Bermet Tashybekova United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management Section Statistics Division, Department of Economics and Social Affairs Email: bermet.tashybekova@un.org</p> <p>Ms. Aigerim Mussayeva United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management Section Statistics Division, Department of Economics and Social Affairs Email: aigerim.mussayeva@un.org</p>
Local logistical and organizational matters	<p>Eng. Mohammad Almabrook Office of the President General Authority for Survey and Geospatial Information Saudi Arabia Email: m.almabrook@geosa.gov.sa</p>
General and program inquiry	<p>Ms. Vilma Frani United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management Section Statistics Division, Department of Economics and Social Affairs Email: frani@un.org</p> <p>Ms. Aigerim Mussayeva United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management Section Statistics Division, Department of Economics and Social Affairs Email: aigerim.mussayeva@un.org</p>

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