

### UN RESOLUTION

The UN Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM) decided in July 2013 to formulate and facilitate a draft resolution for a Global Geodetic Reference Frame.

In February 2015 the UN General Assembly adopted the resolution *A Global Geodetic Reference Frame for Sustainable Development* – the first resolution recognizing the importance of a globally-coordinated approach to geodesy.

## UN General Assembly urges the sharing of geospatial data to benefit People and Planet

26 FEBRUARY, NEW YORK – The science that supports the precise pinpointing of people and places should be shared more widely, according to the United Nations General Assembly as it adopted its first resolution recognizing the importance of a globally-coordinated approach to geodesy – the discipline focused on accurately measuring changes in the shape, rotation and gravitational field of planet Earth.



PHOTO: KYOUNG-SOO EOM

### Put forward by Fiji

Co-sponsored by 52 Member States, the resolution was originally put forward by Fiji. Ambassador Peter Thomson, Fiji's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, explained that, as a Small Island Developing State, Fiji is vulnerable to increasingly severe natural disasters, sea-level rise and other problems triggered by climate change, but uses geodetic data to plan as best as it can.

"We fully realize the importance of critical geospatial infrastructure and information in helping countries and decision-makers make more informed, evidence-based decisions on mitigation and preparedness", Ambassador Thomson stated.

**NEW YORK:** Ambassador Peter Thomson from Fiji introducing the resolution to the UN General Assembly.

Geodesy plays an increasing role in people's lives, from finding disaster victims to finding directions using a smart phone.

The General Assembly resolution, *A Global Geodetic Reference Frame for Sustainable Development*, outlines the value of ground-based observations and remote satellite sensing when tracking changes in populations, ice caps, oceans and the atmosphere over time. Such geospatial measurements

can support sustainable development policymaking, climate change monitoring and natural disaster management, and also have a wide range of applications for transport, agriculture and construction.

Emphasizing that "no one country can do this alone", the General Assembly called for greater multilateral cooperation on geodesy, including the open sharing of geospatial data, further capacity-building in developing countries and the creation of international standards and conventions.

### Supporting sustainable development

Wu Hongbo, the United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, praised Member States' efforts to "discuss, deliberate and decide on issues relevant to positioning geospatial information" and, noting that geodesy is fundamental for monitoring changes to the Earth, "stressed the significance of the global geodetic reference frame in supporting sustainable development".



## Member States welcome the UN resolution

More statements and news about the Global Geodetic Reference Frame on [www.ungrf.org](http://www.ungrf.org). Follow us on twitter @ungrf.

### CHINA

“China welcomes the UN-resolution on a Global Geodetic Reference Frame, upon which all positioning applications are based”, says Mr. Li Pengde, co-chair UN-GGIM.

### MEXICO

“Mexico welcomes the first UN Resolution on a Global Geodetic Reference Frame (GGRF), key in monitoring earth dynamics. For a dynamic territory like Mexico, an accurate GGRF is key in monitoring seismic activity, disasters, sea level and population changes,” says Dr. Eduardo Sojo, co-chair UN-GGIM.

### UNITED KINGDOM

“The United Kingdom warmly welcomes the first UN Resolution on a Global Geodetic Reference Frame. As well as being fundamental in helping us understand the earth’s processes, the GGRF is key to anything that requires accurate location; from land registration to asset mapping, disaster management and transport planning,” says Dr. Vanessa Lawrence, co-chair UN-GGIM.

### SPAIN

“Spain warmly welcomes the first UN Resolution on a Global Geodetic Reference Frame. Geodesy is a science without frontiers. GGRF will play a key role to unite and strengthen the cooperation between nations as in fact, a Geodetic Frame itself constitutes the foundation of everything, as everything happens somewhere,” says Javier G. Matesanz, Subdirector Adjunto of IGN Spain.

### NORWAY

“Norway welcomes the UN resolution. We need more information about the planet in order to measure and deal with climate change,” says Jan Tore Sanner, Norway’s Minister of Local Government and Modernisation. “International collaboration is crucial in this context, and it’s important for the world community that the UN has now put this work on the agenda.”

### BRAZIL

“Brazil welcomes the UN resolution on a Global Geodetic Reference Frame, as it supports composing the very basic layer of any Spatial Data Infrastructure. Geodesy most of the time being not visible to citizens, plays an important and



PHOTO: IBGE/ARMY TEAM

**BRAZIL:** High determination of the highest mountain in Brazil.

crucial role in the country infrastructure,” says Dr. Luiz Paulo Fortes at IBGE, Brazil.

### USA

“The societal benefits to having a global reference frame are limitless. Many will become more evident when enhanced geospatial information can be used to tackle some of the world’s most complex scientific challenges such as sea level change and global climate change.” says Dr. Neil D. Weston, Deputy Director, National Geodetic Survey, NOAA, USA.

### NEW ZEALAND

“New Zealand has been a keen supporter of this resolution and we congratulate Fiji and the whole team for reaching this milestone,” says Graeme Blick, Land Information New Zealand Chief Geodesist.

“New Zealand has recently seen the impact of earthquakes, as an island nation located across the Pacific/Australian plate boundary. The adoption and use of the Global Geodetic Reference Frame will contribute to the fundamental spatial infrastructure needed for hazard mitigation in the event of a natural disaster.”

### JAPAN

“Japan welcomes the UN resolution on the GGRF, because GGRF is the only platform for mapping and surveying. It has been one of key enablers for Japan to recover from The 2011 off the Pacific coast of Tohoku Earthquake efficiently, by providing the firm ground for all restoration works. Japan would not be sustainable without GGRF,” says Basara Miyahara, director, Geospatial Information Authority of Japan.

### AUSTRALIA

“Australia welcomes the UN resolution on the Global Geodetic Reference Frame. This important milestone will provide the political impetus to improve cooperation, data sharing and investment for the enhancement of the GGRF. The momentum this resolution adoption has created will position the global geodetic community well for the complex task ahead, developing a Roadmap for GGRF enhancement,” says Gary Johnston, co-chair GGRF Working Group.

