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OPENING STATEMENT
Fourth High-Level Forum on United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management

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Honourable Ministers,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,
Friends and colleagues,

- On behalf of the United Nations, I warmly welcome you all to this Fourth High-Level Forum on United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management, with the theme "Good Land Governance for the 2030 Agenda" in our UNECA headquarters here in Addis.

- I would like firstly to express my very sincere gratitude to the Government of Ethiopia and my wonderful UN colleagues in UNECA for hosting this critically important meeting, in partnership with the UN-GGIM Secretariat.

- In particular, I would like to pay tribute to our local organising committee capably led by Mr. Sultan Mohammed, Director General of the Ethiopian National Mapping Agency and Chair of UN-GGIM: Africa, and Mr. Andre Nonguierma, in the GeoInformation and Spatial Statistics Section of UNECA. On behalf of all of us, thank you for the tireless efforts of you and your team, for giving us the opportunity to take up this important global topic and for bringing the discussion to Africa, a region that has more to offer than any other on this subject.

- This High-Level Forum carries with it some level of urgency. As you will be aware, in September 2015, the UN General Assembly adopted 'Transforming our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development' as the global policy to guide the way we collectively manage and transform the social, economic and environmental dimensions of humanity and our planet over the next 15 years. The 2030 Agenda is anchored by 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), 169 targets and a global indicator framework (230 indicators), in order to measure and monitor progress.

- Unlike the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the 2030 Agenda is much more transformative in its intent, and recognizes the need for new data acquisition and integration approaches to improve the availability, quality, timeliness and disaggregation of data to support the implementation of the new development agenda at all levels. In this regard it

specifically challenges us to exploit the contribution to be made by a wide range of data, including earth observations and geospatial information.

- Coming back to the theme of this Forum, and while not a singular goal in itself, many aspects of 'land' are captured within and underpin the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Specific areas include: poverty alleviation; food security; water and sanitation; gender equality; health lives; sustainable agriculture and production; sustainable cities and human settlements; forests and ecosystems; and land degradation and biodiversity loss. The SDGs, targets and indicators related to land at the global level will be important in order to deliver on better land governance, tenure and land rights at the national and local level.

- Your considerations on 'Good Land Governance for the 2030 Agenda' can build on the many dialogues and ongoing initiatives of United Nations programmes convened in recent months, including in the land metrics of the global indicator framework which has just recently agreed by the UN Statistical Commission.

- Therefore, I am pleased to see a number of key and globally important 'geospatial' topics in your sessions. In your deliberations you will discuss: land information for sustainable development; good land governance and regulatory frameworks; geospatial land information; technology and capacity development; and shared objectives and partnerships.

- Importantly, you will do this after hearing from Ministers and leaders from our global community. They will inform us of their own national policy challenges and perspectives on good land governance. As with past Forums, such dialogues prove to be extremely valuable in providing insights to high-level government needs and processes, and enriching for all of us.

- In closing, I am pleased to see so many delegations and participants here in Addis, the global diversity of expertise present, and that our colleagues from Africa are well represented. I particularly welcome our international partners and the private sector. This High-Level Forum offers a unique platform for free flowing, open and inclusive dialogue. This greatly assists UN-GGIM to shape national systems, influences common practices, and brings our professionals from the public and private sectors together to harness the power of geospatial information. I invite you, as experts from many different countries, to work together to this end.

- I wish you a productive meeting over the next three days and very much look forward to the interactions with you all.

    Thank you.

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