

## **EF: Opening Remarks (UN Cartographic Section)**

Good morning, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen, my name is Ayako Kagawa, Chief of Geospatial Support Unit of the United Nations Cartographic Section. On behalf of my Chief Cartographic Section, Kyoung-Soo Eom, I would like to welcome you to the second Exchange Forum for the Global Geospatial Information Management (GGIM).

I am honoured, and privileged to be here this morning. Following the success of the first Exchange Forum held in Seoul, Republic of Korea, October 2011, we are pleased to continue this forum series between government, industry, international professional organisations and the research community. As a pre-conference to the Second GGIM High Level Forum, it serves as a platform for the non-governmental entities to link with the GGIM agenda, whilst demonstrating some of the trends and directions in which the geospatial industry is heading.

Since the launching of the GGIM, we have had many distinguished geospatial industry leaders who have approached us to communicate their support on GGIM, and also their interest in being involved. One of the lessons learnt from the first Exchange Forum was to ensure this support and their voice was formalised in the GGIM process. Thus, we have invited the Joint Board of Geospatial Information Societies (JBGIS), a coalition of leading international geospatial societies which can speak of the geospatial profession at international level, to co-host this Exchange Forum. They are here to facilitate the interesting dialogue that will hopefully take place today. The discussions held here will be fed into the deliberations and interventions in the High Level Forum on GGIM that is to take place as of tomorrow until Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> February. It is a great opportunity for the non-governmental entities to voice their perspectives which will be taken to the main conference debates. I personally hope that today can be used as a warm-up to the High Level Forum, where you can also test out the waters in some of the more unconventional thoughts and proposals for the geospatial community to consider and take note.

I am therefore please to reiterate that this Exchange Forum will serve as a venue to discuss, share your views, concerns and to address how best to future proof the provision of geoinformation through the application of emerging technologies.

Before turning the floor to our distinguished speakers, on behalf of my Chief Mr. Kyoung-Soo Eom, I would like to acknowledge those who have made all this possible. The planning committee for this Exchange Forum, many of you who are sitting here today from JBGIS, UN Secretariat, Qatar Statistics Authority and Centre for GIS Qatar. Without their continuous informal and formal communication and logistical organisation throughout these past few months and weeks, this would have not been possible at all. We would also like to express our special thanks to Professor William Cartwright, Chair of JBGIS, who understood the importance of this Exchange Forum and allocated tremendous amount of thought and time to realise this event. I would like to invite the participants here today for a round of applause for them to bring us here today.

Last of all, as a Geospatial Information Officer in the United Nations Cartographic Section, supporting the cartographic and geospatial requirements of the Security Council and the UN Secretariat, I have a great personal interest in listening to your discussion today. The more GGIM can provide the global strategic framework for the decision makers, the more the UN Cartographic Section will be able to provide the required geospatial support to the political decision makers in the Security Council and the wider international community. I hope that this Exchange Forum will provide a great opportunity to make important steps forward in resolving the common challenges that we all face.

I hope you will have a fruitful exchange today. Thank you very much.

(United Nations Cartographic Section, 3 February 2013)