Geospatial Information For the Post-2015 Development Agenda

Regional to Global Perspective

Statement for the Panel Discussion during the UN-GGIM Third High Level Forum

Beijing, Peoples Republic of China

22 October 2014

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Excellency Ministers,

Distinguished Participants,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) launched at the turn of the Century, have been the most successful anti-poverty push in history. There has been important progress across all the Eight Goals, with some targets already having been met well ahead of the 2015 deadline.

Despite the substantial progress attained by the MDGs, much effort needs to be accomplished to eradicate poverty and backwardness from our Globe.

Accordingly the UN, based on the Rio+20 Outcome Document, established an Open Working Group tasked to develop the Post-2015 Sustainable Development Agenda, building upon the work of the MDGs. This Working Group has issued a list of 17 Proposed Sustainable Development Goals to be attained by 2030 by integrating the Social, Economic and Environmental dimensions of Sustainable Development with the central theme of freeing humanity from poverty and hunger as a matter of urgency.

In the zero draft and outcome documents that elaborate the laudable proposed goals, the role of "Geospatial Information" in such a global and high level endeavour happens to be hardly mentioned.

Hence, the challenge to the Global Geospatial Information community is to devise ways and means to sensitize policy decision makers at all levels that Geospatial Information can facilitate the planning, monitoring and

measuring of the progress with respect to each one of the proposed Post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals.

The regional priorities for the Africa Region, based on the proposed 17 goals and over a hundred targets of the Post-2015 Development Agenda clustered around the four broad themes of Economic Sustainability; Social Sustainability; Environmental Sustainability; and Governance and institutions would not be complete without the location attribute: **They need to be localized!**

In terms of Economic Development, particularly Ending Extreme Poverty and ensuring Food Security, Agriculture plays an important role. Better agricultural information is one of the key factors in understanding current trends and status that determine food security from local to global scales. Geospatial technologies have developed to provide powerful tools in almost every aspect of food security, including research, development and aid delivery programs.

In terms of Social Development, Socio-economic development is measured with indicators, such as GDP, life expectancy, literacy, levels of employment, etc. The availability of authoritative, accurate detailed and maintained Geospatial Information is key in the monitoring and measurement of such indicators Globally, Regionally, Nationally and Locally.

Mapping Socio-economic indicators improves the ability to make better decisions in the various socio-economic development sectors, such as population dynamics, health and education.

In terms of Environmental Sustainability, to Curb Climate Change and Ensure Clean Energy: Every aspect of climate change affects or is affected

by geography, be it at a Global, Regional, or Local level. To help us better understand such geographies, Geospatial Information is the most powerful tool for collecting, analyzing, and ultimately managing this extremely complex problem. Mapping vulnerability to climate-related disasters and identifying risks to disasters will also help to effectively coordinate disaster management activities.

Addressing issues related to climate change will also address issues such as improving Agricultural systems, improve health and reduce risks of disease such as malaria, and the current global challenge related to the Ebola epidemic.

The use of clean and renewable energy such as hydro, solar, wind and geothermal will ensure environmental sustainability. Geospatial information on these resources and the different climatic variables will help identify, assess and locate availability and feasible use of the resources.

Furthermore, Geospatial Information and geospatial technology can be used for developing solutions for water resources management such as flood management, watershed management, assessment of ground water potential, and assessing water quality, and planning water resources on a Local or Regional scale.

With respect to Good Governance including Peace and Security, Geospatial Information has applications in many fields including humanitarian assistance, population displacement and peace and security. It can be used to analyze population density, average income, visualize crime locations, and identify patterns in crime.

Geospatial Information has also the potential to increase the effectiveness and transparency of development assistance and humanitarian aid and allow peacekeepers, humanitarian response teams, and other partners to operate with more actionable information in the field and achieve greater success.

From the foregoing, we can understand that Geospatial Information is essential to pinpoint the Locations where interventions are required for the attainment of the Post-2015 Development Agenda as Authoritative, Accurate and Maintained Geospatial Information allows users across the globe to share ideas on how to meet their resource needs, plan efficient land use, and protect the environment to guarantee the survival of future generations.

Africa is facing major challenges with regards to the collection, processing, analysis and dissemination of such highly essential Authoritative, Accurate and Maintained Geospatial Information. To address these issues, efforts are being made by UN-ECA to support African countries to enhance the knowledge base needed to strengthen human and institutional capacities of the member states in formulating geospatial policies and strategies and the development and implementation of National Spatial Data Infrastructures (NSDI). UN-ECA is also leading the Global Geospatial Information Management (GGIM) initiative in Africa, in order to ensure that GGIM adequately reflects African issues and shape its direction and dimension in addressing geospatial governance in Africa.

Hence, I call upon the Geospatial community to coordinate their efforts with the UN-ECA and National Mapping Authorities to support African countries to tackle the Geospatial Information Divide and contribute

towards the successful implementation of the Post-2015 Sustainable Development Agenda.

I Thank You!!