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# Economic and Social Council

25 July 2023

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## Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management Thirteenth session

New York, 2–4 August 2023

Item 3 of the provisional agenda\*

### Enhancing global geospatial information management arrangements

## Enhancing global geospatial information management arrangements

### Note by the Secretariat

#### Summary

The present paper contains the report of the Secretariat, prepared with the assistance of the expanded Bureau of the Committee of Experts, on enhancing global geospatial information management arrangements for consideration by the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management.

At its twelfth session, held in New York from 3 to 5 August 2022, the Committee of Experts adopted decision 12/101, in which it expressed its appreciation to the Bureau and Friends of the Co-Chairs of the Committee for the critical work carried out and significant efforts in leading the preparation and consultation, in an inclusive and transparent manner, of the comprehensive report of the Committee on enhancing global geospatial information management, as submitted to the Council in June 2022 ([E/2022/68](#), annex).

The Committee of Experts welcomed the adoption of Economic and Social Council resolution [2022/24](#) on enhancing global geospatial information management arrangements, in which the Council acknowledged the important work, progress and achievements of the Committee in the area of global geospatial information management and its contribution to the strengthening of geospatial information management capacities and utilization in developing countries, and updated and modernized the terms of reference of the Committee in line with its established global architecture.

The Committee of Experts also welcomed the progress and advanced preparations being made by the Government of India towards convening the second United Nations World Geospatial Information Congress, with the theme “Geo-Enabling the Global Village: No one should be left behind”, in Hyderabad, India, from 10 to 14 October 2022, and encouraged the global geospatial information community to participate in the Congress and share experiences.

The Committee of Experts noted the progress and efforts made to finalize the modalities for the establishment of the United Nations Global Geospatial Knowledge and Innovation Centre in Deqing, China, and the United Nations Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence in Bonn, Germany, appreciated the involvement of the International Advisory Committees throughout the set-up process, and encouraged them to remain engaged and to regularly share progress with the Committee as the Centres operationalize their activities.

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\* E/C.20/2023/1

In this present report, prepared with the assistance of the Bureau of the Committee of Experts, the Secretariat provides information on efforts and progress to continue to strengthen and enhance the coordination and coherence of global geospatial information management arrangements, and reflects on the Committee's response to resolution [2022/24](#), including options for ensuring a sustainably resourced secretariat in the 2024 budget submission, which would be crucial for the future of the work and global coordination and coherence of the Committee.

The Secretariat also provides information to the Committee of Experts on the convening of the second United Nations World Geospatial Information Congress, held from 10–14 October 2022 in Hyderabad, India, and the continued progress made towards the establishment of the United Nations Global Geospatial Knowledge and Innovation Centre in Deqing, China. The Committee will be informed of the inauguration and progress on the establishment and operationalization of the United Nations Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence at the United Nations campus in Bonn, Germany, under the agenda item entitled “Global geodetic reference frame” during this thirteenth session.

## I. Introduction

1. On 15 June 2022, pursuant to Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) resolution [2016/27](#), the co-Chairs of the Committee of Experts transmitted to the Council, via letter to the Vice-President of ECOSOC, the Committee's final report on strengthening institutional arrangements on geospatial information management ([E/2022/68](#)) entitled 'Enhancing global geospatial information management'. The comprehensive report described the process of 'transition' marking the Committee's work, starting with an initial five-year period (2012 – 2016) on **establishment**; the report then detailed its second five-year period (2017-2021) on **institutionalization**; and then considers the Committee's future in the coming five-year period – on **implementation** of the Committee's frameworks, anchored by the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework (UN-IGIF). The report demonstrated the clear value proposition the Committee of Experts offers to the United Nations and to Member States as a means to strengthen multidisciplinary and multisectoral participation and reinforce the commitment to achieving an inclusive and integrated approach to global geospatial information management.

2. On 22 July 2022, ECOSOC welcomed and noted the Committee's comprehensive report on its implementation of resolution [2016/27](#) on strengthening institutional arrangements on geospatial information management ([E/2022/68](#)). Further, the Council adopted resolution [2022/24](#) entitled 'Enhancing global geospatial information management arrangements.' The resolution reiterated the importance of strengthening and enhancing the effectiveness of the Committee of Experts, particularly for the achievement of its operations focused on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the UN-IGIF to strengthen and ensure its continued effectiveness and benefits to all Member States. Resolution [2022/24](#) represents an unequivocal endorsement that the Committee Expert's work is important to the Council and Member States.

3. At its twelfth session, held in New York from 3 to 5 August 2022, the Committee of Experts adopted decision [12/101](#), in which it welcomed the adoption of ECOSOC resolution [2022/24](#) and updated and modernized the terms of reference of the Committee in line with its established global architecture. The Committee of Experts also expressed its appreciation to the Bureau and Friends of the co-Chairs of the Committee for the critical work carried out and significant efforts in leading the preparation and consultation, in an inclusive and transparent manner, of the comprehensive report of the Committee on enhancing global geospatial information management, as submitted to the Council in June 2022 ([E/2022/68](#)).

4. At its twelfth session, the Committee of Experts were informed that, due primarily to budget concerns, resolution [2022/24](#) fell short in key areas of the ambition reflected in the zero draft which had been prepared by Committee members; namely in the provision of regular conference management and services for the Committee; resources to strengthen the Secretariat; and sustainable funding to support developing countries to participate in the annual sessions of the Committee of Experts ([E/C.20/2022/5/Add.1](#)). Therefore, in making decision [12/101](#) the Committee of Experts noted that greater advocacy would be required to ensure that Member States remained engaged in the discussions at the United Nations to identify options for a sustainably resourced secretariat in the (Secretary-General's) 2024 budget submission, which would be crucial for the future of the work and global coordination and coherence of the Committee of Experts.

5. For the immediate future, and as was the case following resolution [2016/27](#) in 2016, the Secretariat and the Bureau of the Committee of Experts will include in its annual agenda this present agenda item 'Enhancing global geospatial information arrangements'. This item will provide Member States with information on efforts and

progress to continue to strengthen and enhance the coordination and coherence of global geospatial information management arrangements, of practical actions to implement resolution [2022/24](#), and to mobilize resources as the global role and relevance of the Committee of Experts continues to grow and expand.

6. The Committee of Experts is invited to take note of the present report and to express its views on its implementation of ECOSOC resolution [2022/24](#) and, in this context, to examine the strengthening and enhancement of such arrangements by the Committee, as well as on the way in which the global geospatial information management community contributes to efforts by Member States to improve and strengthen their national geospatial information management arrangements. Points for discussion and decision are provided in paragraph 48.

## **II. ECOSOC Resolution: Enhancing global geospatial information management arrangements**

7. ECOSOC resolution [2022/24](#) entitled ‘Enhancing global geospatial information management arrangements’ acknowledges the significant achievements and progress made by the Committee of Experts in the area of global geospatial information management and reiterates the importance of strengthening and enhancing the effectiveness of the Committee, particularly for the achievement of its operations focused on the SDGs and the UN-IGIF. Further, the resolution updates and modernizes the Terms of Reference of the Committee in line with its established global architecture.

8. Due primarily to budget concerns, the resolution fell short in a number of key areas: namely in the provision of regular conference management and services for the Committee; resources to strengthen the Secretariat; and sustainable funding to support developing countries to participate in the annual sessions. The Committee continues to operate as has been the case since its establishment in 2011 – on an ‘as available’ basis during the ‘low activity’ periods, and with no regular budget. However, resolution [2022/24](#) did specifically request the Secretary-General, in the context of his next budget proposal (for 2024 budget), to identify options to strengthen the UN-GGIM programme, within existing resources, including the establishment of a secretariat for the Committee, dedicated to the Committee’s normative and implementation work on global geospatial information management.

9. As outlined in the [oral statement](#) made in connection with the adoption of resolution [2022/24](#), in order to implement the requests contained in the resolution, and with reference to the related conclusions and recommendations contained in the report of the Committee on enhancing global geospatial information management, as submitted to the Council in June 2022 ([E/2022/68](#)), additional recurrent resources would be required effective from 2024, including for up to seven additional, and defined, regular budget staff posts. Therefore, in early 2023, these additional resource requirements were included within the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), the parent department of the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD), proposed programme budget (PPB) for 2024.

10. Also included within DESA’s PPB for 2024 is an updated strategy element that contributes to DESA’s strategic objectives. This strategy element is to “Develop, disseminate and support the implementation by Member States of statistical and geospatial information frameworks, standards and methods, especially those related to the SDGs, the UN-IGIF and other new emerging policy issues”. Related programme performance measures and results are captured for “accelerated implementation of the UN-IGIF” with an aim towards a result that ensures “enhanced coherence and more effective functioning and transformation of the global statistical and geospatial systems”.

11. DESA's PPB has now been reviewed by the United Nations Budget Division, on behalf of the Secretary-General; and subsequently the [Committee for Programme and Coordination](#) (CPC), the main subsidiary organ of the General Assembly for planning, programming and coordination, and which reviews the plan outline and the programmatic aspects of the PPB. As this thirteenth session of the Committee of Experts meets, the [Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions](#) (ACABQ), which examines and reports on the budget submitted by the Secretary-General to the General Assembly, is presently reviewing DESA's PPB. Following that review, the [Administrative and Budgetary Committee \(Fifth Committee\)](#) of the General Assembly, responsible for all administrative and budgetary matters of the General Assembly, will consider the budget of the United Nations during the main part of the 78th session of the General Assembly (October to December 2023) for subsequent adoption. The Committee of Experts will be provided with updates by the Secretariat and Bureau as further information comes to hand.

### III. Second United Nations World Geospatial Information Congress

12. At its twelfth session, held in New York from 3 to 5 August 2022, the Committee of Experts, in adopting decision [12/101](#), welcomed the progress and advanced preparations being made by the Government of India towards convening the Second United Nations World Geospatial Information Congress, with the theme "Geo-Enabling the Global Village: No one should be left behind", in Hyderabad, India, from 10 to 14 October 2022, and encouraged the global geospatial information community to participate in the Congress and share experiences.

13. Hosted by the Government of India, through its Ministry of Science and Technology, and organized by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) through the UN-GGIM Secretariat, the Second United Nations World Geospatial Information Congress (UNWGIC) was convened with overwhelming success at the International Convention Centre, Hyderabad, India from 10 to 14 October 2022. With the main plenary programme covering three days (11–13 October 2022), a number of global and regional meetings, workshops, learning events, expert meetings, and side events were also convened during the Congress week, including the eleventh plenary meeting of the regional committee of UN-GGIM for Asia and the Pacific (UN-GGIM-AP), and the annual meeting of the UN-GGIM Expanded Bureau.

14. With some 1400 participants from 77 countries in attendance, the Congress was [opened](#) with thought-provoking context and welcome statements by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the Prime Minister of India, the Minister of Science and Technology, Secretary of the Department of Science and Technology and Secretary of the Department of Space, Government of India, and the co-Chair of the Committee of Experts.

15. While full details on the second UNWGIC are available on the Congress [websites](#), excerpts of statements by the Secretary General and Prime Minister of India are of relevance to the Committee of Experts. The Secretary-General noted that "we need your geospatial expertise on two fronts: To measure progress – and to make progress. We need you to drive innovation and action through the power of data – focused on the most marginalized and vulnerable communities and places" and "the benefits of more timely, detailed, and accessible data are many: Geospatial information can bridge gaps, provide a clearer picture of where and how we can do better, and deliver deeper insights and smarter decisions. For all of this and more, your knowledge of geospatial data, methods, frameworks, tools, and platforms is essential."

16. The Prime Minister of India noted that “the United Nations can lead the way in taking resources to the last mile in every region. Even in fighting climate change, hand-holding and technology transfer are crucial. We share the same planet. I am sure we can share best practices for saving our planet too. The possibilities that geospatial technology offers are endless. Sustainable urban development, managing and even mitigating disasters, tracking the impact of climate change, forest management, water management, stopping desertification, food security. There is so much that we can do for our planet through geospatial technology.”

17. A comprehensive global geospatial program comprising 15 themes and 42 individual parallel sessions and anchored by the 9 strategic pathways of the UN-IGIF, was prepared by the UNWGIC International Advisory Committee. While the main program and its presentations and ensuing discussions, had an overarching focus on the SDGs and the UN-IGIF, many applauded the inclusion and participation of young adults, school children and the normally under-represented in the Congress program.

18. In this regard, a highlight of the Congress was the dedicated youth forum titled 'Geo-enabling the Global Village with Generation Z and Alpha' where school children and teachers from 18 schools across India presented their geospatially enabled sustainability projects. These schools represented the pinnacle of a competition for schools where children organized, presented, and competed to be the best on how their communities were responding to the SDGs. Teachers comprised the jury. Students presented their work in front of a large audience. Winners were determined and their recognition awarded during the closing ceremony of the Congress. Having the children and their teachers attend and interact with Congress participants was a welcome feature for the UNWGIC.

19. As those from the Committee of Experts and global UN-GGIM community who participated will be able to attest to, the quality and professionalism attached to the convening of the Second UNWGIC by the Government of India was faultless and to be congratulated.

#### **IV. Meeting of the expanded Bureau of the Committee of Experts**

20. As mentioned in the previous section, the expanded Bureau of the Committee of Experts met on the margins of the second UNWGIC in Hyderabad, India on 14 October 2022. Given that the meeting was convened in conjunction with the Congress, the Chairs and co-Chairs of the Committee’s functional groups were additionally invited. While the agenda for the meeting was dominated by reflections on the convening of the Congress, other topics covered included reflections on ECOSOC resolution [2022/24](#) and the twelfth session of the Committee of Experts, the status of the establishment of the United Nations Global Geospatial Knowledge and Innovation (UN-GGKIC) and the United Nations Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence (UN-GGCE), provisional agenda for this thirteenth session of the Committee of Experts, and the general programme of work of the Committee of Experts.

#### **V. Seventh High-level Forum on UN-GGIM**

21. The Sixth High-level Forum on United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management, with the overarching theme “Changing the World – Geospatially”, was to be hosted by the Ordnance Survey of Great Britain on behalf of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, from 20-22 April 2020. However, given the context of the rapidly evolving COVID-19 pandemic at the time, and after much consultation with the host, it was decided to convene a series of Virtual High-level

Forum events, and with a scaled down format comprising three sessions of just over three hours each on 26 May, 2 June and 9 June 2020. With the aim to consider the evolving geospatial landscape and launch the Implementation Guide of the UN-IGIF and the Future Trends in Geospatial Information Management Report, the three Virtual Forum events were streamed to a global audience, with a total of 887 unique participants from 100 Member States from each of the five geographic regions of the world.

22. Following informal discussions in recent months, on 12 July 2023 the Secretariat received an offer from the National Institute of Statistics and Geography (INEGI) of Mexico to host the Seventh High-level Forum on United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management in Mexico City in October 2024, and for the offer to be transmitted to the Committee of Experts at this thirteenth session. This offer is attached as a background document to this present report. With a proposed theme ‘Accelerating Implementation: Achieving Resilience’ the Seventh High-level Forum will bring together participants from governments and stakeholders at the highest level, and provides the convening, participatory and inclusive environment to enhance the knowledge, understanding, communication, and application of geospatial information to accelerate implementation of the UN-IGIF as the overarching strategy at the country-level towards the achievement of the SDGs and addressing climate-related challenges.

23. The Committee of Experts is invited to consider this offer from Mexico and to support the development and implementation of the substantive program of the Seventh High-level Forum.

## **VI. Strengthening the interlinkages among the global geospatial information community**

24. In adopting resolution [2022/24](#), ECOSOC recognized “the sustained efforts of UN-GGIM to establish the United Nations Global Geospatial Knowledge and Innovation Centre (UN-GGKIC) in Deqing, China, and the United Nations Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence (UN-GGCE) at the United Nations campus in Bonn, Germany, each of which will, in an open, inclusive, participatory and transparent manner, provide opportunities to develop and expand global geospatial capacity, competence and capability, and to strengthen geospatial information management arrangements in countries, especially developing countries.” Further, ECOSOC reiterated “the importance of strengthening and enhancing the effectiveness of the Committee of Experts, particularly for the achievement of its operations focused on the SDGs and the UN-IGIF, to strengthen and ensure its continued effectiveness and benefits to all Member States.”

25. In making decision [12/101](#) at its twelfth session in August 2022, the Committee of Experts “noted the progress and efforts to finalize the modalities for the establishment of the UN-GGKIC in Deqing, China, and the UN-GGCE in Bonn, Germany, and appreciated the involvement of the International Advisory Committees (IAC) throughout the setup process, and encouraged them to remain engaged and to regularly share progress with UN-GGIM as the Centre’s operationalize their activities.”

### **United Nations Global Geospatial Knowledge and Innovation Centre, Deqing, China**

26. The Secretariat continues to work with the Ministry of Natural Resources of China in the final preparations of operationalizing the UN-GGKIC in Deqing, China, in accordance with its Memorandum of Understanding. A focus at this time is the recruitment of staff, which includes the Director, as the Head of the Centre, and a team of professional staff who are internationally recruited by the United Nations. This

professional team will be supported by administrative staff recruited by the Centre, as well as persons seconded by the host government. As recruitment of the leadership team advances, it is anticipated that the Centre's Steering Committee and International Advisory Committee (IAC) will formerly meet in the coming months.

27. The **overarching goal** of the UN-GGKIC is to work towards the ambitions of implementation of the UN-IGIF set by Member States to develop capacity, promote and support the required innovation, leadership, coordination and standards to develop, strengthen, integrate and deliver national geospatial information policy, data, systems, tools, services and capabilities into their national government development policies, strategies and arrangements. The **objective** of the UN-GGKIC is to strengthen and advance the geospatial information management capacity development capabilities of Member States, especially developing countries, and to strengthen knowledge sharing and innovative cooperation.

28. In the lead up to the operationalization of the Centre, a group of international geospatial experts convened an 'International Symposium on the Future Geospatial Information Ecosystem' from 20 to 22 April 2023 in Deqing, China. During the Symposium, participants had the opportunity to discuss and 'set the scene' for the geospatial landscape that the Centre will operate in. The following requirements were recognized: Coordination and collaboration; Advocacy and strengthening capacity, particularly for the UN-IGIF and Country-level Action Plan implementation; Promoting knowledge and innovation; and Communication and knowledge management.

29. During the Symposium, participants also had an opportunity to interact with the United Nations Under-Secretary-General (USG) for Social and Economic Affairs. In his interactions with participants, the USG reiterated the importance of implementation. Action plans should not remain just upbeat documents but need to be seen as working towards evidence-based and effective policy development and decision-making for addressing the many social, environmental, and economic challenges before humankind.

30. The summary of the Symposium noted that, as a global centre of excellence on geospatial knowledge, innovation and practice, the UN-GGKIC will leverage the UN-IGIF to advocate for and promote the significance and relevance of integrated geospatial information management; develop global geospatial capacities and capabilities; develop collaborative knowledge and promote innovation by harnessing contemporary frameworks, norms, approaches, solutions and analytics, to enable and assist developing countries to address national, regional and global challenges and implement regional and global agendas.

31. During a recent visit to China by the Deputy Secretary-General (DSG) of the United Nations, on 26 June 2023 the DSG made a visit to Deqing, Zhejiang Province. During the visit, and accompanied by the USG for Social and Economic Affairs, the DSG and her delegation were shown the physical premises of the UN-GGKIC in Deqing and were informed that this Centre is the first office of DESA in China with the objective to strengthen and advance the geospatial information management capacity development capabilities of Member States, especially in developing countries. The DSG, in stressing the urgent need for greater efforts towards 'capacity building' for developing countries, suggested to highlight the importance of geospatial information as an enabler and driver for the SDGs in the form of a side event at the forthcoming 2023 SDG Summit, which will take place in September 2023 in New York.

### **United Nations Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence, Bonn, Germany**

32. Following a series of collaborative and productive consultations over the previous two years, in November 2022 the Agreement between the United Nations and the Federal Republic of Germany, which defines the modality of operationalization of the UN-GGCE in Bonn, Germany, was finalized and signed. This Agreement forms the foundation for the establishment and initial operations of the UN-GGCE.

33. The **overarching goal** of the UN-GGCE is to assist Member States and geodetic organizations to coordinate and collaborate to sustain, enhance, access and utilize an accurate, accessible and sustainable Global Geodetic Reference Frame (GGRF) to support science, society and global development. The **objective** of the UN-GGCE is to support, within available resources, the implementation of General Assembly resolution [69/266](#) through strengthening and advancing: global geodetic cooperation and coordination; worldwide geodetic infrastructure; standards and policies; education and capacity development; and communication and awareness, while also coordinating measures and overseeing their implementation.

34. The Opening Ceremony of the UN-GGCE was convened on 29 March 2023 at the UN Campus in Bonn, Germany. Hosted by the Federal Government of Germany, through its Federal Ministry of the Interior and Community (BMI) and the Federal Agency of Cartography and Geodesy (BKG), and the Secretariat of UN-GGIM, over 100 invited guests, including high-level government and UN dignitaries, members of the inaugural International Advisory Committee of the UN-GGCE and the UN Subcommittee on Geodesy attended the Opening Ceremony.

35. The first meeting of the UN-GGCE Steering Committee and International Advisory Committee (IAC), and the Third Plenary Meeting of the UN-GGIM Subcommittee on Geodesy were convened on the margins of the Opening Ceremony, from 29 to 31 March 2023 at the UN Campus. In its first meeting, the IAC adopted its Terms of Reference and confirmed its membership and co-Chairs, which were subsequently noted by the UN-GGCE Steering Committee. The IAC Terms of Reference note that the IAC and the Centre shall formally report on the implementation and progress of the programme of work of the Centre to the annual sessions of UN-GGIM (the Committee of Experts), through the preparation of written reports and background documents, under the standing agenda item 'Global geodetic reference frame'.

36. This confirms that reporting of the UN-GGCE programme of work and activities will be provided to the annual sessions of the Committee of Experts under the standing agenda item 'Global geodetic reference frame', commencing with this thirteenth session.

### **United Nations Global Geospatial Ecosystem Centre of Excellence, Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia**

37. ECOSOC resolution [2022/24](#) recognized the sustained efforts of the Committee of Experts to, *inter alia*, provide opportunities to develop and expand global geospatial capacity, competence and capability, and to strengthen geospatial information management arrangements in countries, especially developing countries.

38. At its twelfth session in August 2022, the Committee of Experts, in making decision [12/101](#), emphasized the importance of improving and strengthening national geospatial information capacity and capability, especially in developing countries, and called for appropriate national investments in this context, and highlighted the critical need to mobilize extrabudgetary resources at the global level to support regional and national efforts to bridge the geospatial digital divide.

39. At its Tenth Plenary Meeting, convened in Abu Dhabi from 14 to 16 February 2023, the regional committee of UN-GGIM: Arab States supported a recommendation for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to establish and host a United Nations Centre of Excellence in global geospatial information management in Riyadh.

40. On 20 June 2023, the UN-GGIM Secretariat received a formal offer from the government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, through its General Authority for Survey and Geospatial Information (GEOSA), to host and establish a United Nations Global Geospatial Ecosystem Centre of Excellence in Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. GEOSA seeks to establish the Centre as a sustainable, active, and internationally relevant within the system of federated centres of excellence mandated by the Committee of Experts, and which will contribute to knowledge sharing and transfer, capacity development and strengthening, including in the Arab States. The rationale for the Centre is anchored to the vision that the future geospatial ecosystem will be where the entire global geospatial community and stakeholders interact and contribute sustainably to address the many challenges humanity faces by leveraging high-quality, timely and reliable location-based information and impactful geospatial analytics.

41. GEOSA has been making proactive arrangements within the Government for several months and has now obtained approvals from the relevant authorities to convey this offer and enter into subsequent discussions with the United Nations towards an agreement to host, establish and operationalize the Centre commencing 2024 until 2034. Further, GEOSA has requested that this offer be brought to the attention of the Committee of Experts at this thirteenth session for further discussion and decision.

## **VIII. Resources for enhancing nationally integrated geospatial information management**

42. In previous reports to the Committee of Experts, including in August 2019 ([E/C.20/2020/4/Add.1](#)) and August 2020 ([E/C.20/2020/23/Add.1](#)), the extent of funding and contributions, all as extra-budgetary resources, to support the activities of the Committee were detailed. Specifically, these included the second China Trust Fund for the period 2018 – 2022 to continue to improve and strengthen national geospatial information management, systems and capacities in China and other developing countries. Towards the end of 2022, the Secretariat engaged the Ministry of Natural Resources in China, and mutually agreed to extend the second China Trust Fund project by a further two years. This extra budgetary resource supports the activities of the Committee of Experts, including for the participation of delegates from a number of developing countries to the annual sessions of the Committee of Experts, and will conclude on 31 December 2024.

43. The SDG Data Alliance, an international multi-stakeholder partnership with donor support, assists a group of developing countries<sup>1</sup> to address national and global requirements to report on the SDGs through a geospatial lens, and with a specific focus on SDG 10. The ultimate outcome is to accelerate the achievement of the SDGs by identifying where investment will have its greatest impact. The Data Alliance is working with this group of developing countries to strengthen their nationally integrated geospatial information management arrangements leveraging the UN-IGIF and the United Nations ‘self-paced, learn and discover’ approach to develop Country-level Action Plans according to national circumstances and priorities. The Alliance has received additional donor support that allows not only continuing working with the

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<sup>1</sup> Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chile, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Fiji, Guatemala, Honduras, Morocco, Mozambique, Panama, Rwanda, Senegal, South Africa, Tonga, Tunisia

group of developing countries, but also to extend support to up to five additional countries during the next eighteen-month period<sup>2</sup>.

44. It must be acknowledged and appreciated that a number of Member States, especially as the Chairs, co-Chairs and Secretariats of the UN-GGIM functional groups of the Committee of Experts, volunteer critical resources from within their own organizations or agencies to support the work and activities within the functional groups and by extension, the Committee of Experts. This is particularly evident when undertaking and completing a substantive body of work such as the development of frameworks, guides, standards and technical papers. Although these considerable efforts may be viewed as expected by some, it represents additional, valuable in-kind and tangible contributions to the work programme of the Committee of Experts that should be acknowledged and appreciated.

45. With this in mind, ECOSOC resolution [2022/24](#) appreciated the extra-budgetary funding and support from Member States and the efforts to mobilize additional resources, including through the means of trust funds, expert secondments and other sources, as appropriate, to support the activities of the Committee of Experts. The twelfth session of the Committee of Experts, in making decision [12/101](#), highlighted the critical need to mobilize extrabudgetary resources at the global level to support regional and national efforts to bridge the geospatial digital divide and to enhance nationally integrated geospatial information management.

46. Additional resources must be mobilized to support the efforts and activities towards strengthening and enhancing the effectiveness of the Committee of Experts, particularly for the achievement of its operations focused on the SDGs and the UN-IGIF for the benefits to all Member States as well as to develop and expand global geospatial capacity, competence, and capability, and to enhance nationally integrated geospatial information management in countries, especially developing countries.

47. The Committee of Experts is invited to consider how to mobilize extra-budgetary resources to enhance the effectiveness of the Committee of Experts.

## IX. Points for discussion

48. **The Committee of Experts is invited to:**

- (a) Take note of the present report and express its views on the efforts of the Bureau, the Expanded Bureau and Secretariat to take strategic and practical actions to continue to strengthen and enhance the coordination and coherence of global geospatial information management arrangements and related interlinkages for Member States;**
- (b) Take note and express its views on the budgetary process associated with the adoption of resolution [2022/24](#) by ECOSOC, and its implications on the programme of work of the Committee;**
- (c) Note with appreciation the successful convening of the Second United Nations World Geospatial Information Congress in Hyderabad, India, in October 2022;**
- (d) Express its views on the offer from the Government of Mexico to host the Seventh High-level Forum on Global Geospatial Information Management in Mexico City in October 2024, with the theme ‘Accelerating**

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<sup>2</sup> January 2023 to June 2024

**Implementation: Achieving Resilience’, and to support the development and implementation of the substantive program of the Forum;**

**(e) Take note and express its views on progress and efforts to establish the United Nations Global Geospatial Knowledge and Innovation Centre in Deqing, China;**

**(f) Express its views on the offer from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to host and establish a United Nations Global Geospatial Ecosystem Centre of Excellence in Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, support the establishment of the Centre, and encourage Member States and relevant stakeholders to contribute to the substantive development of the Centre of Excellence; and**

**(g) Emphasize again the importance to improve and strengthen national geospatial information capacity and capability, especially in developing countries and call for appropriate national investments in this context; and highlight also the critical need to mobilize extrabudgetary resources at the global level to support national efforts.**