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Item 8 of the provisional agenda*

Global geodetic reference frame

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Note by the Secretariat

The Secretariat has the honour to bring to the attention of the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management the report prepared by the Subcommittee on Geodesy and the Secretariat, which will be available, in the language of submission only, from the relevant web page of the Committee of Experts (<https://ggim.un.org/meetings/GGIM-committee/13th-session/>). The Committee is invited to take note of the report and to express its views on the progress made by the Subcommittee in its efforts to address complex issues facing the global geodetic community, and to achieve the long-term sustainability and quality of the global geodetic reference frame. The Committee is also invited to take note of the report jointly prepared by the international advisory committee of the United Nations Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence and the Secretariat and to express its views on the progress made on the establishment and operationalization of the Centre.

Summary of the report

At its twelfth session, held in person from 3 to 5 August 2022, the Committee of Experts adopted decision 12/106, in which it welcomed the progress made during the intersessional period, including the Subcommittee's considerable efforts to grow the critical understanding, awareness and advocacy for the importance of the global geodetic reference frame as a vital global infrastructure that is of benefit to society and needs to be maintained. The Committee recognized the important collective efforts of the Subcommittee to address the complex issues facing the global geodetic community and to ensure the quality and long-term sustainability of the global geodetic reference frame in the areas of sustainable geodetic infrastructure; education, training and capacity development; geodetic standards and guidelines; outreach and communication; and suitable governance mechanisms to sustain the global geodetic reference frame. In addition, it welcomed the progress made by the Government of Germany and the United Nations to host and establish a Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence at the United Nations Campus in Bonn, Germany, which will provide

* [E/C.20/2023/10](https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/policy/ggim/ggim_2023_10.html).



dedicated resources to address some of the immediate and ongoing challenges in sustaining the global geodetic reference frame, and invited Member States to actively contribute to the work of the Centre.

The Committee of Experts supported the Subcommittee's plans to contribute to the formation of an efficient and competent international advisory committee and governance model to support and guide the establishment and strategic operations of the United Nations Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence, welcomed the offers by Member States and relevant geodetic stakeholders to contribute to the Centre and to foster greater planning and international coordination in pursuit of strengthening partnerships and opportunities enabled by global geodesy and urged a greater contribution from relevant technical experts in Member States. The Committee of Experts also noted the Subcommittee's desire to convene its third plenary meeting at the United Nations Campus in Bonn once the Centre was established.

In the report, the Subcommittee provides information on its progress and activities, including its efforts to continue to implement General Assembly resolution [69/266](#). During the intersessional period, the Subcommittee worked on and revised its terms of reference and structure to align these with the future working arrangements outlined in the position paper on sustaining the global geodetic reference frame and the concept paper on establishing a global geodetic centre of excellence adopted by the Committee of Experts. The terms of reference were agreed by the Subcommittee at its fifth virtual meeting, on 13 December 2022. The Subcommittee met at its sixth virtual meeting, on 21 March 2023, which allowed its global membership to consider and discuss items related to the Subcommittee's design and development of a detailed action plan to sustain the global geodetic reference frame ahead of the in-person third plenary meeting of the Subcommittee.

In the report, the Subcommittee reports on the outcomes from the third plenary meeting of the Subcommittee, hosted by the Federal Agency for Cartography and Geodesy of Germany (BKG) at the United Nations campus in Bonn from 29 to 31 March 2023. The meeting was attended by 41 participants: 27 representatives from 17 Member States that are members of the Subcommittee, 3 representatives from three participating Member States, 10 participants from international and regional organizations and geodetic research institutions and relevant stakeholders. Participants also attended the opening ceremony of the United Nations Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence, held on 29 March 2023. At its third plenary meeting, the Subcommittee considered, worked on and designed a detailed action plan to sustain the global geodetic reference frame with seven agreed strategic actions. The participants considered related matters that impacted its action plan, including the implementation of Economic and Social Council resolution [2022/24](#), as well as General Assembly resolution [69/266](#), and how to leverage the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework (and contribute to its implementation at the country level). The Subcommittee welcomed the availability of implementation guidance and resource materials for the Framework that are presently available or will be available online. The Subcommittee, at its third plenary meeting, dissolved its five working groups, prioritized three strategic actions and established three new working groups to: (a) undertake, document and communicate a global geodesy needs assessment; (b) prepare a state of geodesy report; and (c) further engage in capacity and capability development. The third plenary meeting, affirmed by acclamation its two co-Chairs together with a bureau with geographic diversity in accordance with its terms of reference.

Also in the report, the international advisory committee of the Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence, jointly with the Secretariat, provides information and progress on the establishment and operationalization of the United Nations Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence at the United Nations campus in Bonn. The Centre's overarching

goal 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 to support science, society and global development. The objective 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, training and capacity development; and communication and awareness, while also coordinating measures and overseeing their implementation.

In the report, the international advisory committee, jointly with the Secretariat, reports on its first meeting at the United Nations campus in Bonn, from 29 to 31 March 2023. The report highlights the opening ceremony organized by the United Nations and the Federal Government of Germany, on 29 March 2023, also at the United Nations campus in Bonn, where the Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence is housed. At its first meeting, the international advisory committee welcomed its inaugural membership, adopted its terms of reference, noted its responsibility to provide strategic guidance and advice on the implementation of the Centre's priorities and programme of work and affirmed by acclamation its two Co-Chairs. The international advisory committee, cognizant of the agreed framework plan of the Centre, recommended seven strategic actions for the Centre to consider and pursue.
