

**Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management
Thirteenth session, 2 – 4 August 2023**

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

**Agenda Item #6: The future geospatial information ecosystem
Document: Report of the Secretariat (E/CN.20/2023/6/Add.1)**

Thursday, 3 August 2023

Distinguished Representatives, Delegates, Observers and Colleagues,

It gives me great pleasure to introduce the agenda item on the future geospatial information ecosystem.

At our twelfth session in August 2022, the Committee of Experts acknowledged that the future geospatial ecosystem was a timely and strategically important topic to consider, to reflect on and position the work and vision of the Committee and the geospatial community, and to reduce the growing geospatial digital divide between developed and developing countries.

The Committee noted that a continuing discussion on the geospatial information ecosystem was necessary. Therefore, on behalf of the Secretariat, I wish to present the report under this agenda item that summarises the continuing discussions and efforts that have occurred within our global community during the intersessional period.

These efforts, as captured in the report, comprise three elements: the convening of a summit with geospatial leaders as part of Geospatial World Forum in Rotterdam in May 2023; the convening of a global webinar organized by the Secretariat and Bureau in June 2023; and a set of options for future work emanating from these conversations.

The report highlights how the Committee's Bureau convened a 'Global Webinar on the Future Geospatial Ecosystem: What is the role of UN-GGIM?' on 12 June 2023. Attended by over 320 participants from around the world this Webinar was anchored by contributions from leaders from across the Committee's functional and regional architecture, building on a presentation by representatives of the Secretariat that identified challenges and drivers for change for the future geospatial ecosystem.

A key point of discussion, that has been consistently noted over the last 12 months, is the need for the Committee of Experts to focus on developments in the wider digital and data ecosystems and to consider how these are presenting opportunities for global geospatial information management to have greater positive impact. There continues to be some unease in attempting to scope and define principles of a geospatial ecosystem in its own right. In taking these discussions forward, the question to be addressed now is **how** the Committee progresses this item and **what** action does it take? In this regard, the report suggests three example options for the Committee to consider:

Option 1 – Take a passive approach. This option nominally assumes this agenda item could be closed.

- **Option 2a – Develop a set of principles for the future geospatial ecosystem.** This could comprise a position paper composed of key principles of the future geospatial ecosystem for the Committee's consideration at its fourteenth session.

- **Option 2b – Establish a working group on the future geospatial ecosystem** in addition to the existing functional groups under the purview of the Committee.

While each of these options contain a myriad of advantages and risks, with implications for resourcing and capacity, the Committee of Experts is now invited to provide guidance and next steps on the future geospatial ecosystem and express its views on the options detailed within the report.

Thank You

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