



**UNITED NATIONS**

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**MR. LI JUNHUA**

**UNDER-SECRETARY-GENERAL FOR ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL  
AFFAIRS**

**Opening Remarks**

**Thirteenth Session of the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global  
Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM)  
First Meeting of the Thirteenth Session**

**2 August 2023, 10:30 a.m., Conference Room 3**

**Dear Co-Chairs of the Committee of Experts,  
Excellencies,  
Distinguished Delegates and Observers,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

**It is my great pleasure to join you at the opening  
of the thirteenth Session of the United Nations  
Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial  
Information Management (UN-GGIM).**

**This is my first time joining you in my capacity as  
Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social**

**Affairs, but I have learned a lot in my daily work about the importance of geospatial information for guiding policy decisions at all levels, especially for advancing implementation of the 2023 Agenda and the Paris Agreement.**

**In a world increasingly reliant on higher accuracy measurements and location-based services, collaboration, coordination and coherence in global geospatial information management is more important than ever before. The United Nations is the right place to foster the need cooperation. However, the availability and accessibility of quality, timely and reliable geospatial information remains a challenge, as does the capacity of countries to produce the information they need.**

**Your important work on developing consensus-based norms and frameworks, together with your practical guidance, will allow Member States to strengthen and enhance their national geospatial capacities to measure progress, and to make progress towards a better world for all.**

**Allow me to look back and highlight some of your key achievements:**

**First, progress has been made on the establishment and operation of two centres of excellence, the United Nations Global Geospatial Knowledge and Innovation Centre in Deqing, China and the United Nations Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence at the UN Campus in Bonn, Germany. These centres are much awaited and will contribute to the strengthening and enhancing of geospatial**

**capacities in Member States, especially in developing countries. I take note of an offer by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for a third centre of excellence and look forward to your discussions and decision in this regard.**

**Second, the work on the Operational Framework for Integrated Marine Geospatial Information Management has been completed, ensuring that marine geospatial information is an integral part of the global geospatial information ecosystem. I appreciate that the Operational Framework is about practical guidance for Member States and is also a recognized action under the United Nations Decade for Ocean Science for Sustainable Development. The adoption of the Operational Framework will be timely, considering that the Secretary-General has recently**

**commissioned a publication on marine geospatial information management<sup>1</sup>.**

**Third, I recognize your specific efforts, through the Policy and Legal Working Group to drive consensus around the perception and use of authoritative geospatial data This will help decision makers to develop and enhance their data governance arrangements related to quality data, authority and custodianship.**

**Fourth, I welcome your decision to include climate and resilience in the standing agenda item on geospatial information for sustainable development. This is an important and timely consideration. In this regard, I also note the offer by Mexico to host the**

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<sup>1</sup> The General Assembly in paragraph 388 of its resolution 77/248 of 30 December 2022, entitled "Oceans and the law of the sea" had requested the Secretary-General to prepare a publication on marine geospatial information management.

**seventh edition of your High-level Forum on UN-GGIM in October 2024 with an overarching theme “Accelerating Implementation: Achieving Resilience”.**

**Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates,**

**This year marks the mid-point for achieving the goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The recent reports on SDG progress paints a sobering picture. The world is falling short of meeting most of the Goals. In addition, despite some improvements since 2015 data availability for decision-making remains a challenge. Geospatial information, will play a vital role in filling the gaps.**

**I urge you to accelerate the implementation of your consensus-based norms, frameworks and guides for the betterment of humankind. And also intensify**

**your efforts to strengthen and enhance the effective sharing and use of geospatial information. Critical geospatial information for sustainability and resilience must be available and accessible and more importantly, integrated, for sound and robust policy formulation, decision making and innovation.**

**In closing, I recognize and thank:**

- the three co-Chairs and Rapporteur of your Committee,**
- all the chairpersons and leaders of the regional committees, high-level group, subcommittee, expert groups, working groups, thematic networks, and**
- the many and varied tangible support to this Committee of Experts by Member States.**

**I commend your strong sense of global collaboration and coordination and wish you a fruitful and productive session.**

**Thank you.**

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