



UN-GGIM: Arab States
United Nations Committee of Experts
on Global Geospatial Information
Management for Arab States

**Second Meeting of the Regional Committee of United Nations
Global Geospatial Information Management for Arab States**

(UN-GGIM: Arab States)

Algiers, Algeria
10-11 June 2015

Acknowledgement

Special thanks are offered to all that contributed to the report of the 2nd Meeting of the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Arab States (UN-GGIM: Arab States) held in Algiers, Algeria 10-11 June 2015

Secretariat of UN-GGIM: Arab States

General Commission for Survey
Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
Email: unggimas@gcs.gov.sa
Homepage: <http://www.un-ggim-as.org/>

INTRODUCTION

Objectives of the Meeting

1. The meeting was organized by United Nations Committee on Global Geospatial Information Management for Arab States (UN-GGIM: Arab states) Secretariat, in collaboration with the National Council for Geospatial Information of Algeria. The purpose of the meeting was to facilitate the process of the formal setting of the regional Committee, the UN-GGIM: Arab States, by adopting its Statutes/rules of procedure and organizational structure, with the election of its Working Groups' Chairs and Vice-Chairs as well as the identification of their functions that will carry out its work programme for the next years.

Attendance

2. The meeting was attended by 37 participants of whom 32 were from the following 10 countries in the region: Algeria, Egypt, , Kuwait Lebanon, Morocco, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia and United Arab Emirates. Also in attendance were the UN-GGIM Co-Chair and the United Nations Statistics Division /UN-GGIM Secretariat representative and three invited speakers. A complete list of participants is presented in the Annex II.

Opening

3. His Excellency, the President of the National Council of Geographic Information in Algeria opened the meeting and welcomed the respected delegations to the 2nd meeting of the UN-GGIM Arab States held in Algiers for the period from June 10 to June 11, 2015. He also stressed that the Government and the people of Algeria take pride in hosting this regional event. He thanked the participants for taking some time from their valuable schedule to attend this important meeting and expressed his pleasure to see many Arab country representatives coming to Algiers and sharing their experiences in geospatial information. He then wished participants a successful deliberation.
4. Chair of UN-GGIM: Arab States H.E Morayyea Hasan Al-Shahrani then took the floor with an address in which he expressed thanks and appreciation to the Democratic People's Republic of Algeria for hosting the second meeting of the Committee and for the excellent preparations and warm welcome. He then highlighted the most important objectives of the Committee and its efforts in developing cooperation among the member countries and taking initiatives for the advancement of geographical work to support decision making. He said such support can prove to be instrumental when it comes to taking important decisions relating to the improvement of social and environmental conditions based on geospatial information. He added that our cooperation can also include the exchange of expertise and technologies to improve the components of geospatial data infrastructure on both the regional and international levels.

H.E the Chair recalled and praised the actions taken at the first meeting of the UN-GGIM Regional Committee for the Arab States held in Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, on 24-

25February2015 resulting in the formation of four technical working groups whose task is to keep abreast with all developments in the work of the UN-GGIM Regional Committees.

5. A welcome speech was made by Mr. Hamid Oukaci, Vice-Chair of UN-GGIM Arab States and the General Secretary of the National Council of Geographic Information in Algeria, where he pointed out the role played by the UN-GGIM: Arab States in providing a platform for exchanging experiences and best practices among Arab countries. He further called for more support to the UN-GGIM: Arab States by the member states to keep it in line with similar international committees.
6. . In her speech, Vanessa Lawrence, Co-Chair of the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM) underscored the importance of this meeting as a further step to boost cooperation and dialogue among countries and among countries and regional and international organizations, as well as the use of geospatial information in support of sustainable development.
7. A final welcome speech was made by Amor Laaribi, representative of the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM) Secretariat at the United Nations Statistics Division where he commended the National Council of Geographic Information for providing a platform for country representatives from geospatial formation related fields – including statisticians – to come and work together.
8. Round table introduction of member states representatives.

ADOPTION OF THE STATUTES

9. The meeting agenda was put by the Chair of UN-GGIM Arab States for approval. The UN-GGIM: Arab States Secretariat opened the floor for deliberations on the committee statutes. Copy of the statutes had been already sent by the Secretariat to member countries long time before the meeting for thorough consideration. The UN-GGIM: Arab States representatives reiterated that most of the statutes articles comply with the UN and similar regional committees' laws. The UN representatives shall review the English version of the UN_GGIM Arab States statutes to ensure consistency with international legal frameworks in terms of governance. Member country representatives unanimously voted in favor of the statutes.

Brief Overview of UN-GGIM

10. The second session had an update of the UN-GGIM by Vanessa Lawrence, Co-Chair of the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management. In her speech, Vanessa reviewed the establishment of UN-GGIM as a global initiative to bridge the gap in the management of geospatial information and a formal mechanism to coordinate

GGIM activities in this respect. The UN-GGIM proved to be an effective platform in supporting national development, economic growth, and improved decision-making and enhanced policy formulation. Vanessa gave real-time examples for geospatial information management serving UN sustainable development goals. She also highlighted the UN-GGIM efforts in drafting a UN Resolution on Global Geodetic Reference Frame.

WORK PROGRAMME AND WORKING GROUPS

11. The four Working Groups, **WG1 on Institutional Arrangements, Legal and Policy Issues, Awareness and Capacity Building**, **WG2 on Fundamental Data & Geo Standards**, **WG3 on Geodetic Reference Frame**, and **WG4 on Integration of Geospatial & Statistical Information**, as well as their respective invited speakers were briefly introduced.
12. The third session was dedicated to discussing the scope of work of the Working Group 1. Vanessa Lawrence, Co-Chair of the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management gave a speech on the institutional arrangements, legal and policy issues, awareness and capacity building. In her speech, Vanessa stressed the importance of examining trends in institutional arrangements. She shed light on the survey conducted on the geographic information management in terms of existence of strategy, legislation, types of national GIM entities, and governance. The survey results showed that further analysis is still needed in some areas of institutional arrangements. As for the legal and policy considerations, she emphasized the importance of approaching some legal and policy frameworks such as privacy, liability, intellectual property, national security, and open data laws. When it came to awareness and capacity building, she cast light on the latest events and meetings held by the UN-GGIM regional committees.
13. The fourth session was dedicated to discussing the scope of work of the Working Group 2. Dr. Jean-Philippe Grelot, the Director General of the National Institute of Geographic Information in France, identified the objective of the working group as “Demonstrating the capacity of and describing the way authoritative geo-information contributes or will contribute to major sustainable development goals for the Arab countries and region”. He reviewed the different areas for the application of geospatial information (such as digital and cadaster mapping, urban systems, and land administration), and the challenges arising from using new technologies (in terms of collecting, processing, accessing, and distributing these information), and the approaches involved and the methodologies used. He also stressed the importance of providing quality-assessed data for the implementation of public policies nationally and regionally. Finally, he pointed out the significance of abiding by international geo-standards such as ISO, OGC, and IHO with a view to facilitating connection of systems, data, and procedures on the one hand, and gaining time, assets, resources, and opportunities on the other hand. Several recommendations were given by Dr. Grelot on the strategies, tools, and mechanisms required for dealing with geospatial data.

14. The fifth session of the second day of the meeting covered the scope of work of the Working Group 3 on Geodetic Reference Frame. A speech was given by Dr. Zuheir Altamimi from the National Institute of Geographic Information in France, where he dealt with the rising demand for a Global Geodetic Reference Frame (GGRF) vis-à-vis the currently adopted International Terrestrial Reference Frame (ITRF). He also outlined the obstacles that stand in the way of GGRF enhancement, which gives preference to regional reference frames. A brief introduction was given to the organizational structure of the International Association of Geodesy (IAG) with its different commissions and sub-commissions. Dr. Zuheir concluded his speech with a suggested roadmap covering the technical and organizational requirements for Arab states to be compatible with the global ITRF.
15. The sixth session was allocated to the scope of work of the Working Group 4 on the integration of statistical and geospatial information. A speech was given by Marie Haldorson, Director of Regions and Environmental Statistics in Sweden. In her speech, Marie took the Swedish experiment under the umbrella of UN-GGIM Europe as a case in point in bridging the gap between statistical and geospatial data and thus creating statistics based on spatial information. She gave an in-depth outline of the “Infrastructure for Spatial Information in the European Community” (INSPIRE) covering 27 member states as a directive to support environmental policies. Through cooperation between relevant authorities in Sweden, INSPIRE proved how spatial data is seen as a strategic asset for statistics with its major contribution to evidence-based decision making. Concluding her remarks, Marie advised Arab countries to have a work plan for adopting a statistical spatial framework and taking institutional arrangements for close cooperation.

ELECTION OF WGS OFFICERS

16. The seventh session had a discussion about the issues of the four working groups and the selection of their chairs. For the Working Group 1, the United Arab Emirates was selected as a chair and Morocco as a Vice-Chair. For the Working Group 2, Tunisia was selected as a Chair and Qatar as a Vice-Chair. For the Working Group 3, Algeria was selected as a Chair and Lebanon and Saudi Arabia as Vice-Chairs. For the Working Group 4, Oman was selected as a Chair and Egypt and Kuwait as Vice-Chairs. .

NEXT MEETING

17. United Arab Emirates has graciously offered to host the third meeting of the UN-GGIM: Arab States. The time of the next meeting is to be decided by the member countries during the 5th GGIM meeting in August 2015.

CLOSING

1. HE Morayyea Hassan Al Shahrani, the Chair of UN-GGIM: Arab States, concluded the meeting by thanking to the Democratic People’s Republic of Algeria for hosting the second meeting of the Committee and for the excellent preparations and warm welcome. H.E. thanked all participants to the meeting for their valuable contributions. He was pleased with the

interactive discussions and the proposed set of recommendations made by the participants to improve geospatial information development at national and regional levels. He wished to continue to work with them and look forward to seeing all of them and their colleagues at the Third meeting UN-GGIM: Arab States to be held in UAE. He wished to see all of them and their colleagues at the UN-GGIM events to be held in New York, from 3rd -7th August 2015. He then declared the Meeting closed.

ANNEX 1: AGENDA OF THE MEETING

2nd Meeting of UN-GGIM: Arab States

Algiers, Algeria

10-11 June 2015

Provisional Agenda

- Opening
- Welcome Speeches
- Introductions
- Adoption of the Agenda
- Adoption of the rules of procedure/statutes
- Update on UN-GGIM
- Introduction to each Working Group (WG) (15 minutes each)
- WG1: Institutional Arrangements, Legal and Policy Issues, Awareness and Capacity Building
- Next Meetings
- WG3: Geodetic Reference Frame
- WG4: Integration of Geospatial & Statistical Information
- Discussion on the issues of the WGs with 10 minute presentations from each WG
- Selection of Chairs for the WGs
- Approve the UN-GGIM: Arab States Report to UN - GGIM
- Next Meeting
- Conclusions and Closing Remarks

ANNEX II: LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Algeria

1. Mr. Hamid Oukaci

General Secretariat of the National Council of Geographic Information in Algeria and Vice-Chair
of UN-GGIM: Arab States

2. Mr. Naceur Omrane

Technical Director, National Council of Geographic Information in Algeria

3. Mr. Arezki Kesraoui

Director General

4. Mr. Gamdani Labidi

Director

5. Mr. Taoufik Aouameur

Director

Egypt

6. Ms. Mennat Allah

Senior GIS Developer

7. Mr. Mohammad Monstaser

GIS . STAT. Specialist

8. Ms. Hoda Anwar

Senior GIS Specialist

Kuwait

9. Ms. Lawahez Al-Gatan

Assistant Undersecretary for Admin. Support & Information

10. Mr. Hassan Abdulgafoor

GIS Analyst

Lebanon

11. Mr. Jean Doumit

Adviser, Arab Surveyor Union

Morocco

12. Mr. Tarek Laghzil

Head of Geodesy Section

Oman

13. Mr. Rabea Sulaiman Alaghbari

National Survey Authority

14. Mr. Sulaiman Al-Zadjali

15. Mr. Sameh Al-Araimi

16. Mr. Zaher Al-Mahrooqi

National Center for Statistics and Information

Qatar

17. Mr. Mohamed Al Miri

GIS Centre

Director General

18. Salman Al-Hayal

Head of Department

Saudi Arabia

19. H.E. Morayyea H. A. AlShahrani

General Commission for Survey (GCS) President

Chair of UN-GGIM :Arab States

20. Mr. Saad Mohamed A. Alhamlan

General Manager of Geospatial Information Center

21. Mr. Bandar Saleh A. Almuslmani

General Manager of Geodesy and Land Survey

22. Mr. Ahmad Yahya M Al-Neami

Manager of Geospatial Databases

23. Mr. Mohammed M. AlShahrani

Manager of Business Services

24. Mr Musaed Alzahrani

General Manager of Borders & Documentation

25. Mr. Hamzah Al-zahrani

General Secretariat of the National Commission for GIS

26. Mohammed Alghamdi

GCS President Advisor

27. Gabriel Khoury

GCS President Advisor

28. Mr. Abdullah Mohammed Alhamlan

Manager of Maps Unit, Ministry of Economy and Planning

Tunisia

29. Mr. Zouheir Fatnassi

Office of Topography and Cadastre

30. Jawhar alwheeshi

National Centre for Mapping and Remote Sensing

United Arab Emirates

31. Mr. Abdulwahab Al-Bustani

Military Survey

32. Mr. Khaled Al Melhi

Chief Executive Officer, Bayanat for Mapping & Surveying Services LLC

UN-GGIM Bureau

33. Ms Vanessa Lawrence CB

Co-Chair UN-GGIM

UN-GGIM Secretariat/United Nations Statistics Division

34. Amor Laaribi,

UN-GGIM Secretariat at the United Nations Statistics Division

Invited speakers

35. Dr. Jean-Philippe Grelot

Director General of the National Institute of Geographic Information in France,

36. Dr. Zuheir Altamimi

National Institute of Geographic Information in France

37. Marie Haldorson

Director of Regions and Environmental Statistics in Sweden