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ISTANBUL DECLARATION

The present conference room paper contains the text of the Istanbul declaration of the United Nations Geographic Information Working Group (UNGIWG), issued by the 13th Annual Plenary Meeting of the UNGIWG held in Istanbul, Turkey, from 27 February to 1 March 2013. The document relates to the agenda item 4, Use of spatial data and activities related to the United Nations Geographic Information Working Group and the United Nations Spatial Data Infrastructure. For more information, please visit <http://www.ungiwg.org/>.

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ISTANBUL DECLARATION

UNITED NATIONS GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION WORKING GROUP (UNGIWG)

We, the participants of, one year after the official launch of the Centre of Excellence for UN Spatial Data Infrastructure Programme by the Assistant Secretary-General and Chief Information Technology Officer of the UN Secretariat, hereby issue this Istanbul Declaration on advancing global geospatial information management and use by both the UN entities and Members States.

Recalling the 2010 decision of the General Assembly recognizing the UNSDI as one of the UN System-wide Information and Communications Technology (ICT) harmonization initiatives of the UN ICT Strategy;

Recalling Resolution 2011/24 of the United Nations Economic and Social Council, which recognized the need to promote international cooperation in the field of global geospatial information management;

Recalling further the Seoul Declaration on Global Geospatial Information Management (GGIM) of 26 October 2011, which called for a cohesive global community of practice, the promotion of common frameworks and standards at all levels, the documentation of best practices, and the need for capacity development at national level;

Recalling the Doha Declaration on Advancing Global Geospatial Information Management of 6 February 2013 committing the international community to work together with all stakeholders under the coordination of the United Nations;

Recognizing the GGIM vision and governance structure and the technical capacity and functional remit of UNGIWG and UNSDI;

Recognizing that the Rio+20 outcome document “The Future We Want” placed particular emphasis on the importance and value of reliable and authoritative geospatial information for sustainable development, humanitarian assistance and disaster risk reduction;

Recalling the report of the UN System Task Team to the Secretary General on the post-2015 UN Development Agenda “The Future We Want for All” which calls for improving access to geographical information and geospatial data, and building capacities to use scientific information;

Recalling the Issues Note of the 4-5 October 2012 retreat of the High Level Committee on Programmes highlighting cross-cutting/sectoral issues to be considered as constituent elements of an overall strategic vision to guide system-wide work on the post-2015 development agenda and the way the UN system should reposition itself to best support the implementation of this agenda, taking into account the changing geo-political, social, environmental, and economic realities of the world.

We, therefore resolve,

- to reaffirm our commitment to working together as geoinformatics professionals from UN entities and in partnerships with Member States, standards setting bodies, academia and industry to build the UN Spatial Data Infrastructure;
- to jointly clarify the governance structure that would integrate and strengthen the technical capacity and geospatial outputs of GGIM, UNGIWG and UNSDI towards Delivering as One;
- to affirm the importance of a stable, credible, and reliable UN Spatial Data infrastructure built on internationally recognized standards and solid inclusive governance that integrates, manages, and delivers geospatial information for timely, evidence based and efficient decision-making and policy formulation for the UN system on issues including, inter alia, climate change, disaster risk reduction, humanitarian and crisis response, and business continuity;
- to affirm the importance of an agreed set of authoritative core global reference datasets that support sustainable development and humanitarian activities and to work jointly to support the creation, improvement and maintenance of these core global reference datasets in partnership with relevant stakeholders;
- to coordinate with relevant UN Committees such as the Committee on the Peaceful use of Outer Space (COPUOS), the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN) and GGIM to help bridging the various communities within and across Member States which are providing quality geospatial data and/or services or are users of data, information and knowledge;
- to continue building on the UNSDI and the appropriate mechanism to meet the operational requirements of this declaration and to ensure that the benefits accrue at the national level and within the stakeholder community.

Issued on 1st March 2013