

UN-GGIM: Americas Third Session
05-06 October, 2016
Sheraton María Isabel Hotel, Mexico City
Conference Room Classico

Miércoles, 05 de octubre

A. Verification of quorum and Approval of Agenda

The Executive Secretary, Monica Aguayo reported that according to the statutes of the Regional Committee (Article 22), the necessary quorum for the meeting is, half plus one representative. Therefore, with the current membership of 38 countries, 20 representatives would need to be present. This meeting was attended by 31 countries, so quorum requirements were met with the presence of 81% of the Committee. The Regional Committee unanimously approved the proposed agenda.

B. Welcome and Opening Remarks

Rolando Ocampo, President of the Regional Committee, welcomed the representatives of the member countries, and the authorities participating in the opening session, Pascual Gerstenfeld, Director of the Statistics Division of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and Julio Santaella, President of the National Institute of Statistics and Geography of Mexico (INEGI). He also mentioned that our continent can be a leader in the integration of statistical and geospatial information given INEGI's the experience on the subject.

The vocal members gave welcoming remarks.

Wadih Neto- Vocal Member for South America, offered to continue to share the experience of the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE) on the integration of Statistical and Geospatial Information and thanked the member countries for attending.

Eric Loubier- Vocal for North America, expressed his gratitude for the organization of the Committee's Session and stressed that from North America, they have seen much progress in the last couple of years in terms of use of geospatial data by the governments that was not accessible before, demonstrating progress in the knowledge and use of geospatial information in the region.

Max Lobo, Vocal Member for Central America, said that there are countries in the Central American region who are the process of improving production and management of geospatial information, and have significant challenges, such as improving the geodetic infrastructure. It is hoped that through the support of UN-GGIM they will be able to address this challenge. He thanked PAIGH for their support in achieving the Integrated Map of Central America and acknowledged the success of the project.

Rohan Richards, representing the Vocal for the Caribbean (Trevor Shaw), thanked and welcomed the members of the Regional Committee. He apologized for the absence of his colleague who could not be present due to the impact of Hurricane Matthew to Jamaica.

Alvaro Monett, Vice-President of the Committee, expressed the importance of regional contribution to important issues on the global agenda such as integrating statistical and geospatial information; compliance of the 2030 sustainable development agenda; disaster risk reduction; and the global knowledge base, all very important tasks at the moment. He also mentioned the importance of the relationship with each member state to make the communication possible from the national to the regional and to the global.

In this regard, Rolando Ocampo thanked the work of United Nation incorporating geospatial efforts. He also thanked Rodrigo Barriga, Secretary General of the Pan American Institute of Geography and History (PAIGH) and William Martinez, President of SIRGAS for participating, and informed that they together with GeoSUR and the Committee are working on the Joint Action Plan 2016-2020.

He also thanked June Soomer, General Secretary of the Association of Caribbean States, as well as Cecille Blake of the UN-GGIM Secretariat; Valrie Grant, President of URISA Caribbean Chapter; and Earl Edwards

from the University of the West Indies St. Augustine, all organizations that have actively contributed to the achievements of the UN-GGIM: Americas Caribbean Project .

Pascual Gerstenfeld, welcomed the opportunity to participate in the session of the Regional Committee, especially thanking the Presidency of UN-GGIM: Americas for the leadership shown with the collaboration with the Statistical Conference of the Americas that for a year and a half has been strengthening. He mentioned the relevance of the existence of the institutes on the continent that are responsible for the production of statistical and geospatial information, and the Americas being the only continent with that feature, which is an excellent way to bring this integration throughout the region.

The President of INEGI, Julio Santaella, thanked all the attendees and mentioned that we live in a world where geospatial information constantly grows in size and complexity, which requires new methods for analysis, new technology and capacity building to exploit it. He noted that that this was confirmed by the resolution adopted by ECOSOC last July to strengthen institutional arrangements on geospatial information management. He stressed that the data revolution we are experiencing does not neglect geospatial information; and that the work to be done in this session has a greater importance in the context of Agenda 2030 and the SDG's as "not leaving anyone behind" requires a rich variety of geospatial data, so that the work of each participant is a step forward for the region. The President of INEGI highlighted the work being done in the Project for Strengthening spatial data infrastructures in Member States and Territories of the Association of Caribbean States. Finally he welcomed the 60 delegates from 31 countries and 12 regional organizations, and invited Member States to reflect and make the necessary decisions and agreements to share in their countries which will lead to the better application for public policy. Julio Santaella then inaugurated the Third Session of UN-GGIM: Americas.

Keynote Presentations

ECOSOC Resolution to strengthen UN-GGIM- Cecille Blake

In her presentation, Cecille Blake began by thanking the leadership of Mexico in the process of adoption of the resolution of the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations (ECOSOC) to strengthen the institutional arrangements on geospatial information management and explained to the delegates the role of ECOSOC, the need to have a resolution adopted, the preparation and adoption of the resolution, its main clauses , as well as the implications an of the role of each of the Member States in the implementation of the resolution. The resolution adopted on 27 July 2016, facilitated and presented by the Permanent Mission of Mexico to the United Nations, and introduced by the Co-Chair of UN-GGIM, Rolando Ocampo, was co-sponsored by 12 Member States. She also explained each section of the resolution and outlined its implications, including: the green light to continue the work by the Committee of Experts, a greater understanding of the importance and role of UN-GGIM by the Permanent Missions, representatives in capitals and departments and units of the UN.

Ms. Blake also noted that one clause in the resolution addressed a change to the ECOSOC agenda, where from the item Cartography was changed to Geospatial Information. In addition, as adopted at the Second Session of UN-GGIM: Americas, the substantive work of the Regional Cartographic Conference for the Americas and Asia-Pacific is assumed by their respective regional bodies of UN-GGIM who now have greater autonomy for their activities and regional responsibilities to hold annual meetings outside the formal UN guidelines.. She also mentioned the need for funding through voluntary contributions from Member States Finally, she concluded that the resolution provides leverage to Member States for national support to work on their national of Spatial Data Infrastructures (SDI) development, and supports their participation in future meetings of UN-GGIM, as the national experts are drivers of the global agenda of UN-GGIM, and asked delegates from member countries to recognize that they are responsible for the activities of the Committee of Experts and that the Secretariat is at the service of the Committee. Finally she asked the Regional Committee to identify their roles and the level of contribution of each country to the vision of UN-GGIM: Americas and the objectives of UN-GGIM version 2.0 post the adoption of the resolution.

ECLAC Resolution on the Integration of Statistical and Geospatial Information- Pascual Gerstenfeld

Pascual Gerstenfeld highlighted the role of Mexico in the presidency of UN-GGIM: Americas and the Statistical Conference of the Americas (SCA) of ECLAC. He explained in detail the Resolution 712 on Regional Integration of Statistics and Geospatial Information, which was approved at the thirty-sixth session of ECLAC, which recommends the creation of a forum for substantive dialogue between the SCA ECLAC and UN-GGIM: Americas; recognizing that the immediate general objective is the regional agenda on the measurement, monitoring and achievement of the objectives of sustainable development, and the survey and analysis of the census round 2020. He further recommended exploring joint mechanisms to develop projects such as the Integrated Pan-American Map with statistical information on population (MEGA) and an atlas with information on gender for the America. Further he welcomes the holding of regular joint meetings between the two

agencies. He proposed a virtual meeting in the coming months to define the next steps, with a view to a possible meeting under the framework of the next session of the Regional Committee in Santiago de Chile; with member states of SCA ECLAC and the permanent representatives to the United Nations of the member countries from both organizations.

C. Special Presentations

Joint Action Plan 2016-2020- William Martínez, President, SIRGAS

In his presentation, William Martinez presented the background of the Joint Action Plan between the Pan American Institute of Geography and History (PAIGH), GeoSUR, SIRGAS and UN-GGIM: Americas, explaining the new challenges of the global geospatial information management raised in the document "Future Trends in Geospatial Information management: the five to ten year version", in its first and second edition. The new version of the Joint Action Plan seeks to harmonize efforts and the work plans of these initiatives and promote the specialization of each, avoiding duplication and preparing relevant actors and institutions to address in the best way, the continuing challenges, technological changes and innovations. The new edition of this 2016-2020 Plan was signed at the United Nations Headquarters in New York, at the 6th session of UN-GGIM, in August 2016. Its main contents are: institutional framework of each of the organizations, common elements of SDI in the Work Plan and the Joint Action Plan with the proposals for each of the four regional initiatives.

Fundamental Data- Rodrigo Barriga, General Secretary, PAIGH

The Secretary General of the PAIGH explained the definition of fundamental data as the reference data that provide the basis for constructing or referencing any other set of thematic data, and fulfill the same function as the basic cartography and are of general purpose. Some examples of this type of data are: the coordinate system, administrative units, transport networks, hydrography, topography and orthophotos, etc.

Rodrigo Barriga presented the Integrated Map of Latin America, proposing location, anthropic geographic data, and images, as fundamental geospatial data.

Rodrigo Barriga also spoke about the Global Spatial Data Infrastructure Association (GSDI) that is now an observer member of the Regional Committee. He explained its strategic plan and invited member countries to the 15th GSDI World Conference that will be held in Taipei from November 29 to December 2, 2016

The Regional Committee acknowledged the contribution of the Pan American Institute of Geography and History and agreed that this body take responsibility for coordinating the Americas efforts on Fundamental Geospatial Data, in order to address this important issue on the global agenda of the UN Committee of Experts on GGIM and to report to the Regional Committee its progress.

Academic Network of UN-GGIM - Daniel Paez, Universidad de los Andes, Colombia.

Daniel Paez presented the Academic Network of UN-GGIM, its background and objectives, including being a coalition of leading universities and research centers that serves as a platform for the academic sector to provide support for the vision of UN- GGIM. This will be done through strategic knowledge, research, education and training, as well as providing educational capabilities, in order to continue identifying and addressing the challenges and opportunities of the Committee of Experts. He explained that the network is composed of national, regional and international institutions.

The Secretary of the Academic Network proposed that the Committee support the creation of the Academic Network of the Americas and requested that, if approved, they would seek to create a database of interested researchers in the region, so this Regional Network can make recommendations to the Committee at its next session.

On the proposal, Rolando Ocampo stressed the importance of having representation of the region in the Global Academic Network and suggested the participation of the National Autonomous University of Mexico, and submitted the proposal to vote.

The Regional Committee approved the creation of the Academic Network for the Americas, led by Universidad de los Andes, Colombia and the University of the West Indies, St Augustine, Trinidad and Tobago, for which the member countries will send the contact information of universities in order to have a directory of participants and start working together. It was further agreed that at the next session of the Regional Committee, the Academic Network will report and give its recommendations to member countries.

Geodetic Capabilities Diagnosis for Central America - Max Lobo, Vocal Member for Central America

Max Lobo highlighted the presence of 6 of the 7 Central America countries, thanked them for their active participation in the session and expressed his desire to join efforts as a region.

The Vocal Member for Central America commented that the diagnosis presented was made in mid-2016 and included for comparative purposes data from Mexico and the Dominican Republic.

He explained that the main purpose of the diagnosis was to determine the geodetic capabilities of Central America, focused on the geodetic infrastructure of horizontal reference. He also mentioned that although comparisons tend to be subjective due to the differences between the objectives, needs, capabilities and financial resources in every country in Central America, it serves as a measurement parameter to evaluate what is being done well, what has been omitted, and therefore, what can be improved.

Incorporation to Ameri-Geoss- José Eduardo de la Torre, INEGI

Eduardo de la Torre explained that earth observations do not refer only to the satellites, but also those obtained through drones, aircraft, ice monitoring systems in oceans and land, in-situ observations, etc. He also commented that the data sources are varied and integrated to the best practices for the benefit of decision makers, in order to comply with international agreements, given that one of the main objectives of the Group on Earth Observations (GEO) it is to share data.

Eduardo de la Torre explained that the membership of GEO has increased, however, there are still some gaps in the region, especially in Central America and the Caribbean. He therefore invited UN-GGIM : Americas member countries who are not , joined GEO to become members. Rolando Ocampo stressed the importance of collaboration between GEO and the Regional Committee for synergies between the two organizations and stressed the invitation.

Wadih Neto suggested communications between focal points of UN-GGIM and GEO, in order to share experiences within countries as members of both organizations.

Alvaro Monett, said that the SDI give a broad thematic diversity, and this gives an opportunity within national SDI to support the objectives of GEO.

Pascual Gerstenfeld said that he would convey this message to the Executive Secretary of ECLAC in order to join GEO.

Therefore, the Regional Committee noted the work of the Group on Earth Observations (GEO) and agreed that the Executive Secretary of the Regional Committee will circulate relevant documents of the GEO and its regional initiative AmeriGEOSS, including the strategic plan 2016-2025 and the procedure to be part of this initiative. This, will allow member countries access to the benefits of belonging to these platforms for both national priorities and the interaction between UN-GGIM and GEO regional and global levels for monitoring and complying with international agreements and objectives related to the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development.

Private Sector Network of UN-GGIM- Valrie Grant, President, URISA Caribbean Chapter.

Valrie Grant presented the background, establishment, vision and objective, guiding principles and structure of the Private Sector Network and explained that participation will be free and open worldwide to all private sector organizations and industry-related associations. This will allow these entities to contribute and extend the capabilities of the global policy to develop tools and services that allow the integration of geospatial information within and across member countries. She concluded by informing that a press release to promote the Private Sector Network is scheduled to be released soon and would include a call to participation. Further she announced that a meeting of the network is to be held on the sidelines of the meeting of legal and policy frameworks of UN-GGIM in Malaysia on 17 October.

UN-GGIM: Americas acknowledged the creation and recognized the work done by the Private Sector Network of the Committee of Experts on UN-GGIM, and agreed that a Private Sector Network representative should present a report at the next session of the Regional Committee.

D. Reports

Annual Report of UN-GGIM:Americas, Rolando Ocampo

Rolando Ocampo presented the Annual Report of activities of the Regional Committee 2015-2016, that was submitted to the Committee of Experts at its 6th Session in August 2016 at the United Nations headquarters. The President highlighted the most important activities of the Regional Committee during the last year of work, including: efforts on the Integration of statistical and geospatial information in collaboration with the SCA ECLAC and the project of the Geospatial Statistical Framework for the Americas (MEGA); tasks related to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; administrative arrangements for the following cooperation projects: with the Government of Mexico, through the AMEXCID; with the Mexico-Chile Cooperation Fund; with PAIGH and with Geospatial Media and Communications.

He highlighted the five training courses given under the Caribbean Project, in addition to the delivery and installation of geodetic stations. Finally he stressed the importance of the new edition of the Regional Committee Joint Action Plan 2016-2020.

UN-GGIM:Americas Diagnosis , Álvaro Monett

Alvaro Monett began his presentation by thanking the members who had answered the joint questionnaire, explaining that it was a collaborative work that provides a base for the work plans of the Working Groups of the Regional Committee and that the objective is to obtain the information of the 38 member countries. To date the response rate is 76%. The Vice-President explained the content of the diagnosis: Standards and Technical Specifications; Promotion and Evaluation of Spatial Data Infrastructure; Integrating Statistical and Geographic Information and Access and Use of Geospatial Information in Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change then presented its main results. He finished his presentation by commenting that by identifying gaps Member States will find ways to address them, and the objectives is that through the operation of the Working Groups the member countries can keep improving their situation, and in addition there are many best practices that need to be disseminated and exchanged.

After the presentation, Wadih Neto suggested that the survey be conducted again in the future in order to have comparable data, in addition to providing a place where the National organizations could publish their best practices and national experiences.

Raul Molina from GeoBolivia, committed to submit the properly answered survey by his country.

Tatiana Delgado from the Informatics Union of Cuba and Valrie Grant from URISA Caribbean Chapter, suggested that surveys should be more comprehensive with comparison possibilities with other regions and regional organizations, in order to see the full universe of geographic management. They suggested to involve the Private and Academic Networks.

As a result of these suggestions the Regional Committee decided to update the SDI Observatory on the website of UN-GGIM: Americas, in order to disseminate the activities of the Regional Committee in the various subjects addressed by its five Working Groups.

E. Working Group Sessions

Working Group on Regional Coordination and Cooperation

Remarks of the Technical Committee of the Caribbean Project

The session of this Working Group responsible for the project on Strengthening of Spatial Data Infrastructure in countries and territories of the Association of Caribbean States (ACS), began with the remarks by members of the Technical Advisory Committee of the project.

June Soomer, Secretary General of the ACS, acknowledged the work of the Government of Mexico for the initiative taken in 2014 and the implementation of the Caribbean Project by INEGI, where 19 Caribbean countries, within the framework of UN-GGIM have received sufficient training and infrastructure in a short period of time. She mentioned that the main challenge is to harness the momentum generated and continue with the achievements for the region. Further she thanked the organizers for the invitation and encouraged the Committee to continue having a productive working session.

Valrie Grant, President of URISA Caribbean Chapter, thanked Mexico and Chile for facilitating the integration of the Caribbean UN-GGIM. She took the opportunity to ask participants of the project to continue to engage

and to provide timely answers when information is requested. She also congratulated the Working Group on Geospatial Information and Services for Disasters for convening the International Forum in Barbados, and encouraged the Caribbean countries to participate more actively. In closing she acknowledged the presence of June Soomer mentioning that her recent appointment would bring new energy to the ACS and the region. Finally, she recognized the member countries affected by Hurricane Mathew and asked for all the possible support for them.

Juan Gabriel Morales, from the Mexican Agency for International Development Cooperation (AMEXCID), thanked the organizers for the opportunity to share on behalf of the Government of Mexico, the recognition for the success of this project, and the achievements obtained in such a short period of time. He urged Caribbean countries to take over the project and assured the continuity of support and strengthening of relations with the Caribbean.

Report of the Capacity Building Activities - Andrew Nurse, Antigua and Barbuda

Andrew Nurse, representative from Antigua and Barbuda shared the experience of his country with the replication of training courses given under the Caribbean Project. He explained that the courses on standards and cartography were given to various national agencies using geospatial information, and the plans for the continuity of capacity building. Andrew Nurse highlighted the constraints being faced by his country: lack of hardware in some departments, little or no budget allocation for the licensing of software or upgrades, lack of human resources with anticipated skills to meet the needs of the departments, and an absence of a national protocol on data management.

In closing he stressed that the training done so far under the project, has contributed to the future training at the local level, and that Antigua and Barbuda is grateful for the knowledge sharing across the region.

Incorporation of the Caribbean to SIRGAS - William Martínez, President, SIRGAS

The President of SIRGAS explained that since 2013 an invitation was made to the Caribbean to join SIRGAS including the ability to develop activities that provide the basis for education and sustainable development, and the establishment of international and interdisciplinary contacts to participate in research projects at the regional and global scales.

He also said that the benefit of having the central data processing at the University of the West Indies (UWI), with its expertise and human resources, will in time make the integration stable and sustainable which is necessary for maintaining and monitoring GNSS stations donated by the Government of Mexico. These measures would guarantee 10 to 15 years of operation. He then urged representatives of the Caribbean to continue the commitment as users of these stations.

Report of Activities- Efraín Limones, Director, Caribbean Project, INEGI

Efraín Limones presented the progress made by the Caribbean Project according to the strategic plan that was prepared at the beginning of the project. He explained that on average, they have had an 83% attendance rate at 8 training courses, exceeding the initial target of at least 80%. In regards to this phase of the project, he said that the next courses will be held in Trinidad and Tobago, on Land Use Classification using MAD-Mex, and in Santiago, Chile on Geographic Data Quality.

With regard to strengthening the Geodetic Network, he explained the installation of 16 GNSS stations, and noted that the next step would be the installation at the Data Center at The University of the West Indies, St. Augustine and the incorporation to SIRGAS.

He also spoke on the Land Cover Map and next steps in this activity, including the next training course, delivering each country's processed maps based on the Land Cover 30 meter imagery, and the definition of the timeline to verify the results of the initial classification and integration of the entire map.

Mr. Limones also described the activities being carried out on the Digital Map of the Caribbean, including the bidding process to purchase the servers; the translation of systems and manuals; and he noted the upcoming activities of this phase of the project, including a training course, the creation of an inventory of statistical and geospatial information, and promoting the definition of a Metadata Profile for the region, among others.

To conclude his presentation, the Project Director urged the countries in the Caribbean to facilitate compliance with the objectives, particularly in sending technical information requested in a timely manner.

Rodrigo Barriga, Secretary General of PAIGH offered the Latin American Metadata Profile V 2.0, to be taken into account for the creation of the Caribbean Profile. Valrie Grant welcomed the offer and committed to follow up.

Dwight Francis, representative of Saint Kitts and Nevis, expressed the appreciation for the donation of infrastructure, capacity building and incorporation into UN-GGIM, and stressed the usefulness of all these phases of the project for the region.

Thursday , 06 October

Working Group on access and use of geospatial information in disaster risk reduction and climate change (WG-DRRCC)

Strategic Framework on Geospatial Information and Services for Disasters- Rohan Richards, Co-chair UN-GGIM WG-Disasters.

Rohan Richards presented the background and activities of the UN-GGIM Working Group on Geospatial Information and Services for Disaster and presented to the Regional Committee the proposed Strategic Framework for Geospatial Information and Services for Disaster 2016-2020, remarking that the expected result is that the human, economic and environmental disaster risks, be prevented and reduced by the use of geospatial information and services; with the main goal of having accessible and available quality geospatial information in a timely and coordinated manner. The Co-chair of the Working Group invited delegates of UN-GGIM: Americas to get involved in this Working Group and support the adoption of the proposed Strategic Framework.

Report of Activities- Louis Brown, coordinator of the WG-DRRCC

Louis Brown presented the objectives of the Working Group; the progress of activities; the results of the diagnosis of the region; the perspectives on climate change and the work plan for 2017.

With respect to the 2017 work plan, he described the four main lines of action: a regional Implementation Strategy for the Priorities for Action of the Strategic Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction; baseline for mapping of risks, hazards/threats and vulnerability; assess the monitoring of climate change Impacts by member countries; assess climate change adaptation strategies being employed; and he described all of them and how to address each of them.

When the presentation ended, Rohan Richards said there is much information available from national reports and communications and best practices from several countries in this field, as is the case of Mexico through CENAPRED, as presented by Dr. Carlos Valdes in the opening presentation of Latin America Geospatial Forum, and the disaster experience of Chile.

Eric Loubier – Canada- commented that this is the Working Group through which the Regional Committee can have the greatest impact, so we need to be ambitious. He said that the issue of climate change is regularly addressed locally, but that the affected areas are not necessarily the best prepared, so that this issue cannot be tackled only locally and must involve more work areas and harmonize National SDI. He pledged that Canada would more actively participate in this WG.

Alvaro Monett – Chile- stressed the importance of the contribution of the 38 member countries to this Working Group, and called for greater collaboration to fulfill the objectives.

William Martinez- SIRGAS/COLOMBIA- In the case of Colombia, he noted that in order to answer the questionnaire on environmental problems, they must contact the respective institution. He said the main challenge is how to handle the difference between production and management of geospatial information

Isis Tejada - Panama- Stated that in the UN system, other working groups and committees of experts are working on climate change and disasters, focusing on resilience. But they do not produce geospatial information, but use the information of civil protection, and there is no communication between the actors of climate change and risk reduction. She said that the role at national level is to place all the necessary information in our SDI to make it available.

Horacio Castellaro- Argentina- said that in his case, the National Institute of Geography was invited as a consultant on geospatial issues within the Risk Management Committee in Argentina, and is a way that can increase communication and interoperability between national agencies.

Max Lobo-Costa Rica- commented that these ideas highlight the important role of the SDI in the countries.

Eric Loubier- Canada- urged delegates, as a geospatial community, to lead the effort of placing the information in the different places and platforms where required. He said it is our responsibility to coordinate efforts to share information.

Rolando Ocampo- Mexico- informed the Regional Committee that there is a platform in Mexico called Collaboration Disaster Site that provides information from the specific area where the disaster took place. He agreed with the comment of Eric Loubier that as specialists, our role is to know how to provide the information in an immediate way; and invite them to engage with national civil protection and disaster, to give advice and provide geospatial information. He concluded by saying that with all the experience of the Caribbean in this area, he is glad that the coordinators of the working groups at the global and regional levels are from the Caribbean. Further he encouraged member countries to have greater coordination with the Working Group on this fundamental issue.

At the end of the discussions, the Regional Committee recognized the relevance of the Global Strategic Framework prepared by the Working Group on Geospatial Information and Services for Disasters.

WG on the Integration of Statistical and Geospatial Information (WG-ISGI)

This Working Group session was divided into the two main parts of the Work Program and by the two organizations that coordinate this WG, first, the presentation by the Geographic Institute Agustin Codazzi (IGAC) of Colombia regarding geospatial enabling public policy and the second by the National Administrative Department of Statistics of Colombia (DANE) on the Statistical Geospatial Framework of the Americas (MEGA).

The first presentation was done by Fredy Alberto Gutierrez Garcia from IGAC; he noted that one of the main objectives of this Working Group is to promote the use of geospatial information in decision-making and policy design, and proposed the following three points for the fulfillment of this goal: develop general guide for spatial enablement of public policy; make a proposal to assess the capabilities of the public policy environment and contribute to the definition and harmonization of fundamental geospatial data themes of the global Working Group on this issue.

The second presentation of this WG was given by William Martinez, representing DANE, who presented the proposed work plan regarding MEGA, which is aligned with the principles of the Global Geospatial Statistical Framework. Among the proposed work is having MEGA 1.0 during 2017, with a pilot project applying the high-level principle "common geographies for the dissemination of statistics" developed by the Expert Group on the Integration of Statistical and Geospatial Information, which would contribute to the updating and improvement of MEGA in its next versions.

Once the presentations were over, Wadih Neto from Brazil offered the support of IBGE for the fulfillment of the tasks of this Working Group and proposed to the Regional Committee to make an effort for capacity building in this agenda issue that contributes to better addressing the 2020 round of censuses

José Luis Capote –Cuba- pledged to cooperate with the Working Group to show an OGC service to link the geographical framework.

Horacio Castellaro –Argentina- said that in a future version of MEGA, it should incorporate a layer of risk management and offered that Argentina would provide the necessary support in this regard.

Pascual Gerstenfeld –ECLAC- said that the Commission would follow up on the information requirements with the Statistical Institutes.

Upon completion of the discussions, the Regional Committee acknowledged the efforts made by the National Administrative Department of Statistics (DANE) of Colombia and agreed that for the implementation of the first version of the Statistical and Geospatial Framework of the Americas (MEGA):

- a) The Executive Secretary shall receive technical documents and the protocol for access to information made by DANE and circulate together with the formal request for coordination and joint participation. Such request will be jointly issued by the President of the Statistical Conference of the Americas, ECLAC and the President of UN-GGIM: Americas, addressed to the national statistical and geospatial authorities of the Americas.
- b) The National Institute of Statistics and Geography of Mexico will integrate the KML files provided by member countries to be uploaded in the designated Geoportal.

The progress made with this activity will be shared during the next session of the Regional Committee.

Working Group on Standards and Technical Specifications (WG-NET)

During this session of the Working Group, Carlos Guerrero, Coordinator of the WG-NET shared the experience of INEGI with the Regional Committee on Integration Tools and Open Data for Geospatial analysis with MxSIG and also showed the attributes of the Digital Map of Mexico online. He also made another presentation on Mobile Geodetic Marks, an application that combines augmented reality and geolocation, making it easy to locate, view and query the location and attributes of the information of the National Passive Geodetic Network.

Upon completion of these two presentations, the coordinator of the Working Group presented to the Committee the Group's achievements in the past two years and the Work Plan for 2017. The main activities for next year's work include: the Standards Framework Document applicable in the region of the Americas updated with recommendations from Member States; Two documents translated into Spanish: "A Guide to the Role of Standards in Geospatial Information Management" and technical compendium "Companion document on Standards Recommendations by Tier" .

At the end of this session, the company PLANET attended the meeting to show the information and satellite imagery that would be made available for member countries. The Regional Committee recognized and appreciated the effort of the company, for the timely creation and free distribution of satellite imagery mosaic, to support humanitarian actions in the Members States impacted by Hurricane Matthew.

Working Group on Promotion and Assessment of Spatial Data Infrastructure (WG-ProSDI)

Alvaro Monett, coordinator of the WG explained that its main objective is to promote and evaluate the development of Spatial Data Infrastructures (SDI) in member countries of UN-GGIM: Americas, and encouraging collaboration and exchange of experiences. He proposed the following activities for 2017,: elaboration of country profiles for the members of UN-GGIM Americas according to the format provided by UN-GGIM Knowledge Base globally; update capacity building observatory in the UN-GGIM: Americas web site, containing directories of organizations, on-line courses and documents; update SDI Observatory in UN-GGIM: Americas Web Site, including new sections related with UN-GGIM agenda contents; exchange of experiences "face to face" in 4th UN-GGIM Americas Encounter in April 2017 and SDI assessment according to UN-GGIM Methodology.

During the discussion, the Regional Committee decided to update the SDI Observatory on the website of UN-GGIM: Americas, in order to disseminate the activities of the Regional Committee in the various subjects addressed by its five Working Groups.

F. Review of General Issues and final comments

Norbertino Suarez from Uruguay, stressed the importance of the Geodetic Reference Frame of the Americas as a fundamental geospatial data and suggested instituting a working group led by SIRGAS. After discussions on this suggestion, the Regional Committee recognized the relevance and contribution of the Geodetic Reference System for the Americas (SIRGAS) as the representative for the Americas region on the Working Group on Global Geodetic Reference Frame, and agreed that SIRGAS shall submit its annual work report to the Regional Committee at its annual Sessions.

G. Invitation to next Session in Santiago, Chile. April 2017

Álvaro Monett, Vice-President of UN-GGIM: Américas, , invited the Regional Committee to its Fourth Session which will take place from April 03 to April 06, 2017 in Santiago, Chile, in conjunction with the Latin America Geospatial Forum.

To end the session, the Executive Secretary read out the final resolutions that were adopted during the session.