

## **Joint Meeting UN-GGIM: Americas – SCA ECLAC**

Wednesday, April 05, 2017  
ECLAC Headquarters  
Santiago, Chile

### **Minutes proposal**

#### **Opening and Welcome Remarks**

##### **Alicia Bárcena, ECLAC Executive Secretary**

The Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), Alicia Bárcena, thanked and welcomed Mario Palma, President of the Statistical Commission of the Americas (SCA) and Rolando Ocampo, President of the Regional Committee of the United Nations on Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM:Americas). She also welcomed the representatives of Member States across the region and private organizations to ECLAC headquarters in Santiago, Chile.

Dr. Bárcena stressed the importance of convening the UN-GGIM: Americas - SCA-ECLAC Joint Meeting as the first of its kind in the region. She further noted that it was a historic day in which the National Statistical Offices and the National / Military Geographical / Cartographic Institutes of the region were working together. She explained that the meeting was relevant within the context that everything is happening somewhere, and geo-referenced data is indispensable for good territorial planning; so it is vital to coordinate efforts to establish communication channels because "humanity needs all the available tools to change our lifestyles and achieve greater sustainable development"

The Executive Secretary emphasized that the geospatial dimension is an attribute that gives greater power to face socio-economic and environmental problems, and concluded by saying that "we are experiencing a deepening of the global environmental crisis", highlighting the recent events on the continent, particularly in the Caribbean. She highlighted the need for a geospatial correlation using the most advanced technologies and expressed the enthusiasm of ECLAC to support and accompany this integration. Finally, she invited all those present to work together to demonstrate that the territory matters, and that it is an urgent task; therefore ECLAC is committed to open the space for dialogue between both communities, coordinating efforts in an agenda that integrates information and open a permanent communication channel.

##### **Mario Palma, President of SCA-ECLAC**

The President of SCA-ECLAC, Mario Palma thanked Alicia Bárcena and Rolando Ocampo for holding the meeting and reiterated the urgent need to create a symbiosis between geography and statistics.

In addition, like Dr. Bárcena said, he called the meeting a milestone, for being the first of its kind, not only in the Americas, but throughout the world. He emphasized the time taken to make this approach that attends to such an important need, for which he expressed his gratitude for the desire to generate an agreement between UN-GGIM Americas and ECLAC. He ended his remarks by thanking Rolando Ocampo for his commitment to promote the integration, use and importance of geospatial information worldwide.

## **Rolando Ocampo, President UN-GGIM: Americas**

Rolando Ocampo noted that we are facing moments of convergence and collaboration to achieve common objectives and agreements, with regional and national agendas, as well as between disciplines and technical and analytical tools, such as Statistics and Geography. He mentioned that the geospatial dimension, its technologies, applications and applications, have now reached a level of maturity that put geospatial information in a unique position as the main source of alternative information besides official statistics to support these agendas, as well as national developmental processes.

He highlighted the important role played by UN-GGIM in the United Nations, the definition of standards, the design of a global geospatial framework, a global geodetic reference framework and the active support in the process of monitoring and measuring Sustainable Development Goals. He reported that, at the regional level, UN-GGIM is working on pioneering projects such as the strengthening of spatial data infrastructures in the Caribbean with the close collaboration of the Association of Caribbean States, Chile's National Territorial Information System and the Chilean Agency for International Development Cooperation, the Government of Mexico through the Mexican Agency for International Development Cooperation and the National Institute of Statistics and Geography of Mexico (INEGI).

He highlighted the achievement that has been accomplished by bringing together the statistical and geographical communities of Latin America and the Caribbean to achieve a conjuncture of convergence and implementation of agendas for sustainable development.

Finally, he referred to the resolution of the 4th session of the UN-GGIM: Americas, which was held within the framework of this meeting, in which it was agreed to request the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) to provide human resources to fulfill coordination functions at the regional level between ECLAC and UN-GGIM: Americas. The establishment of coordination function will provide support and follow-up to the integration process between statistical communities/agencies, national cartographic/geographic institutes and agencies in charge of the development of Spatial Data Infrastructures in Member States.

## **Introduction of participants**

Once the welcome remarks were concluded, each participant introduced themselves indicating his/her name and their institution.

The following table shows the countries in attendance and representation by the Geographic / Cartographic Office / Spatial Data Infrastructure (NGO) and / or the Statistical Office (NSO):

<b>Country</b>	<b>NGO</b>	<b>NSO</b>
1. Antigua & Barbuda	X	X
2. Argentina	X	X
3. Bahamas	X	
4. Barbados	X	
5. Belize	X	X
6. Bolivia	X	X
7. Brasil		X
8. Canadá	X	
9. Chile	X	X

10. Colombia	X	X
11. Costa Rica	X	X
12. Cuba	X	X
13. Ecuador	X	X
14. El Salvador	X	X
15. USA	X	
16. Guatemala	X	X
17. Guyana	X	
18. Haïti	X	
19. Honduras	X	
20. Jamaica	X	
21. México		X
22. Nicaragua		X
23. Panamá	X	
24. Perú	X	X
25. República Dominicana	X	
26. Sint Maarten	X	
27. St. Kitts & Nevis	X	
28. St. Lucia	X	
29. St. Vincent & the Grenadines	X	
30. Trinidad & Tobago	X	
31. Suriname	X	
32. Uruguay	X	
33. Venezuela	X	X
34. Curazao		X
35. Montserrat		X

### **ECOSOC Resolution for the Strengthening of UN-GGIM**

Cecille Blake thanked the UN-GGIM: Americas Secretariat for its invitation to attend the meeting. Her presentation explained the resolution of the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations (ECOSOC) on strengthening the institutional arrangements on geospatial information management. This included 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 and the role of 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 United Nations.

Ms. Blake also noted that one clause in the resolution addressed a change to the ECOSOC agenda, where 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 Conferences for the Americas and for Asia-Pacific have been assumed by their respective UN-GGIM regional bodies who now have greater autonomy for their activities and regional responsibilities to hold annual meetings outside the formal United Nations guidelines. She also mentioned the need for funding through voluntary contributions from Member States

Finally, she concluded that the resolution provides leverage for representatives of Member States to gain national support to develop their national Spatial Data Infrastructures (SDI), and also support their participation in future meetings of UN-GGIM. Recognizing that national experts are drivers of the global agenda of UN-GGIM, she reminded delegates to recognize that they are responsible for contributing to the activities of the Committee of Experts, the level of contribution to the vision of UN-GGIM: Americas and the objectives of UN-GGIM, including the Integration of Statistical and Geospatial Information.

### **ECLAC Resolution for the Integration of Statistical and Geospatial Information in the Americas**

Pascual Gerstenfeld, Director of the Statistical Division of ECLAC, explained 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. Further he noted 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. The resolution also 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. Also welcomed was the holding of regular joint meetings between the two bodies.

Finally, he outlined as next steps, a schedule that generates synergies between the activities of both initiatives; the elaboration of an Atlas of gender and population; the promotion of the meetings of NSO and NGO in each country; as well as the monitoring of the Sustainable Development Agenda 2030. He stressed the importance of working together for the development of public policies.

### **UN-GGIM. Expert Group on the Integration of Statistical and Geospatial Information (EG-ISGI). Statistical Commission - UN-GGIM**

Rolando Ocampo, co-chair of the Group of Experts on Integration of Statistical and Geospatial Information of UN-GGIM, reported on the decisions of the 48th Session of the United Nations Statistical Commission, which was attended by 300 statisticians with representation from 130 Member States of the United Nations. During the intersessional period, the United Nations Statistics Division conducted a global consultation on the Global Statistical and Geospatial Framework. More than 58 responses were received, with consensus on the five guiding principles of the Framework, which were adopted. He explained that UN-GGIM also reiterated that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the 2020 Censuses Round of population are important drivers for the integration of statistical and geospatial information.

## **Progress and Perspectives of the Geospatial Statistical Framework for the Americas**

The Colombian delegate from the National Administrative Department of Statistics (DANE), Carlos Augusto Molina, presented on the Statistical and Geospatial Framework for the Americas (MEGA), the following structure for MEGA was proposed, having as reference UN-GGIM global and regional, and the results of the survey applied to the Member States of UN-GGIM: Americas:

- 1- The reference system will be SIRGAS.
- 2- Geographic coordinates (latitude and longitude) will be used to facilitate the integration of the information.
- 3- It will initially work with 3 geographic levels: Level 1 (country), Level 2 (department / state or its equivalent to the territorial division subsequent to country) and Level 3 (corresponding to municipality or its equivalent to the territorial division subsequent to the level 2).
- 4- In terms of the socioeconomic variables that are integrated in this first version, the statistics that are normally produced in the countries are taken: total population, population by sex (men and women) and total housing.
- 5- The shapefile was established as an interchange format, since it is an open vector data format, available in several Geographic Information Systems

Mr. Molina also noted the possibility of including the issue of poverty within MEGA is being considered, based on 3 main factors:

- ✓ Use the First Sustainable Development Goal: "Put an end to poverty in all its forms everywhere". Since one of the purposes of MEGA is to support the measurement and monitoring of the SDG.
- ✓ Continuous measurement within the National Statistics Offices.
- ✓ Poverty data are relevant both in the design of public policy and in decision-making.

### **Presentation NGO Argentina**

The delegate of Argentina, President of the National Geographic Institute (NGI), Sergio Cimbaro, reported that under the frame of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, and the ECLAC resolution on integration, the National Institute of Statistics and Censuses of Argentina and the NGI have been working together for some time and, according to United Nations guidelines, have set specific objectives for the integration of Statistical and Geospatial information, which are listed below:

- 1- Use a single Human Settlements Database
- 2- Use the same cartographic base for the 2020 Census
- 3- Generate a database for the geocoding of addresses used for the planning of public policies

### **Consultations and comments by Member States**

**Alicia Bárcena, Executive Secretary, ECLAC**, stressed the importance of sharing the results of this meeting during the 2017 Latin American and Caribbean Forum on Sustainable Development, which will take place from April 26 to 28, 2017, in order to disseminate the possible results of the joint work. She also proposed that during the 37th ECLAC Session in Cuba in 2018 a specific report should be presented on the joint work carried out to that date.

In addition, she remarked that she was pleased to see the Caribbean's extensive participation in UN-GGIM Americas session and that work is being done on the synergies that should be developed. She reported that a seminar of Latin America and the Caribbean cities to be held in June, and would be a

good opportunity to continue developing these synergies. Finally, she asked Pascual Gerstenfeld to share ECLAC's calendar of activities to begin exploring joint activities.

**Alvaro Monet (SDI), Chile.** He noted that Geospatial Data Infrastructures can give a good support to the processes of integration of statistical and geospatial information, since they have the coordination structures that allow the dialogue between the institutions related to these matters.

He cited the case of Chile, in which their SDI is constituted as a space for articulation between public bodies to support disaster management, an example that could be replicated for statistical-geospatial integration, through the creation of specific multi-sectoral working groups to address this important challenge.

Finally, he indicated that there is already an advanced path in the Americas, because there are 19 countries with SDI implemented (13 by supreme decree and 11 by national plan), according to the latest UN-GGIM: Americas' diagnosis. One of the strategies to support these integration processes should be to strengthen the SDI with less progress in the region.

**Delegate of Bolivia (NSO).** He congratulated Argentina on his presentation and mentioned that the determination is very important to achieve cooperation between institutions.

**Wadih Neto (IBGE), Brazil.** He commented that Argentina's presentation is a clear example of what the integration of statistics with geography means, and that for Brazil and Mexico the integration exercise is already natural, but for other countries it is a great challenge. Based on experience of Brazil in this issue, he offered South-South cooperation to countries that have not achieved integration within their countries and proposed the SCA or UN-GGIM: Americas Secretariat to be the focal point for this cooperation.

**Delegate of Costa Rica (NSO).** He emphasized the importance of alliances with the geographical area, given the challenges of the Sustainable Development Goals and the 2020 Census Round, so this is the right moment to carry out these projects.

**Sonia Ivette Sánchez (IGN), El Salvador.** Comentó que, siguiendo el tenor de Brasil, hay desafíos de naturaleza técnica y operativa pero también financiera. Recalcó junto con su colega del INE, ambas instituciones en su país están en total voluntad, pero se necesita una ruta en la región para minimizar costos y maximizar resultados, por lo que solicitó asistencia técnica al INEGI para innovar los procedimientos pues los actuales distan mucho de beneficiar a la población.

**Sonia Ivette Sánchez (NGO), El Salvador.** Pointed that, following the comment from Brazil, there are technical and operational challenges, but also financial. She emphasized together with his NSO colleague, that both institutions in her country are in total disposition, but a road map is needed in the region to minimize costs and maximize results, for that reason she requested technical assistance to INEGI to innovate the procedures since the current ones are far to benefit the population.

**Alejandro Jiménez (NGO), Dominican Republic.** He mentioned that the National Statistical Office of his country, which are also part of the Ministry of Economy, have already had dialogues with the NGO about the 2030 Agenda and all common issues, in order to work together to be able to generate public policies for decision making



**Dwight Francis (NGO), St. Kitts & Nevis.** Thanked Argentina and Colombia for their presentations, and asked about the confidentiality and privacy issues that could be generated by the distribution of information to the public as a result of this integration exercise

**Suzane Russell (NGO), Bahamas.** Pointed out that his country is already carrying out integration work and that a document on this subject was prepared and submitted to the consideration of its Cabinet of Government.

**Sergio Cimbaro (NGO), Argentina.** With regard to the question from the delegate from St. Kitts & Nevis, he commented that the project presented on the georeferencing of addresses and personal data is restricted to public distribution and only the coding of domicile is published, as well as statistical data, thus following the norms publishing.

**Mario Palma, President, SCA ECLAC.** Thanked the participants and presentations and commented that the ideal future is for both regional efforts to become a single group. He also suggested keeping this issues on the work agenda and making a report for the Ninth Meeting of the Statistical Conference for the Americas of ECLAC, to be held in Aguascalientes, México, from November 13 to 17, 2017 and inviting representatives of UN-GGIM: Americas. Finally thanked the organizers of this important meeting.

**Rolando Ocampo, President, UN-GGIM: Americas**

Transmitió los saludos del Director de la División de Estadísticas de las Naciones Unidas, Stefan Schweinfest, y resaltó su compromiso y convencimiento de que se está yendo por el camino correcto.

Por otro lado, felicitó al delegado de Argentina por el ejercicio realizado y resaltó que es un importante método en preparación de la ronda censal 2020, además, estuvo de acuerdo con lo comentado por el delegado de Brasil, respecto a que para Brasil y México la integración es un tema del día a día, y es uno de las razones por las cuales la comisión de estadística y UN-GGIM invitó a Brasil y a México a ser parte del Grupo de Expertos en la materia. Confirmó que ambos pueden apoyar con proyectos de formación de capacidades, para incorporar innovaciones y propuestas en términos de cooperación Sur-Sur. Y respondió a la delegada de El Salvador recalando la disposición del INEGI de apoyar en lo necesario.

Con respecto a la tarea que de la conformación del MEGA, y la petición para presentarlo en CUBA, comentó que se cuenta con una base de datos inicial, y el Departamento Administrativo Nacional de Estadística de Colombia está coordinando este proyecto, así como el INEGI se encargará de la integración de la información y será publicado en el sitio de la CEPAL. Y recaló la importancia de atender la solicitud de los Presidentes de la CEA y de UN-GGIM: Américas en la carta conjunta enviada en el mes de marzo de 2017 a los Directores de las Oficinas Nacionales de Estadística y a los Institutos Nacionales de Geografía/Cartografía, en donde se solicita enviar los datos de contacto de un punto focal técnico por cada organismo (uno de la ONE y uno del IGN), con la finalidad de comenzar los procesos técnicos de implementación del MEGA y lograr tener un entregable de este proyecto que se pueda presentar en el próximo periodo de sesiones de la CEPAL.

He conveyed the greetings of the Director of the United Nations Statistics Division, Stefan Schweinfest, and emphasized his commitment and conviction that this road ahead.

On the other hand, he congratulated the delegate of Argentina on the exercise carried out and stressed that it is an important method in preparation for the 2020 census round. He also agreed with the comments made by the delegate of Brazil regarding the fact that, for Brazil and Mexico, Integration

is a day-to-day issue, and is one of the reasons why the UN Statistics Commission and UN-GGIM invited Brazil and Mexico to be part of the Group of Experts in this field. He confirmed that both can support capacity-building projects, to incorporate innovations and proposals in terms of South-South cooperation. And he responded to the delegate from El Salvador emphasizing INEGI's willingness to support as needed.

Regarding the task of developing MEGA, and the request to present it in CUBA, he commented that there is an initial database, and the National Administrative Department of Statistics of Colombia is coordinating this project, and that INEGI will be responsible for the integration of the information to be published on the ECLAC website. He stressed the importance of meeting the request of the Presidents of SCA and UN-GGIM: Americas in the joint letter sent in March 2017 to the Directors of the National Statistical Offices and to the National Institutes of Geography / Cartography, where it is requested to send the contact data of a technical focal point for each agency (one of the NSO and one of the NGO), in order to begin the technical processes of MEGA implementation and to have a deliverable of this project to be presented at the next session of ECLAC.

### **Proposals for joint work steps and expected results for the next meeting of the Statistical Conference of the Americas**

1. The president of SCA- Mario Palma will report at the upcoming meeting in Mexico 26-28 April, 2017 at the "Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development", on what is happening at today's meeting and the joint work being done between the statistical and geospatial communities to promote that the integration of is possible.
2. In 2018 at the 37th Session of ECLAC in Cuba, give concrete examples of integration as MEGA and Gender Atlas. This should provide a stimulus to get funding to do the work that needs to be done.
3. For the 37th Session in Cuba, present a document on SDI's in the Caribbean, looking at the protection of the Caribbean Sea and what synergies can be developed among the countries to get countries to work together. This came out of the meeting with Ambassador June Soomer, General Secretary of the Association of Caribbean States.
4. For the meeting of 24-29 June, circulate the agenda for the group would have opportunities to show their joint work on the integration of geospatial and statistical data.