

(Provisional)

Partnership in Geospatial Information & Technology for United Nations

Smart Maps Online Seminar

Event organized by UN Geospatial Information Section and UN Open GIS

Supported by the Permanent Mission of Japan to the United Nations

10:00 AM – 11:30 AM (UTC -5), 2 March 2023

Background:

Geospatial information plays important role for better decisions and stronger support to people and planet. Throughout history, geospatial information, such as maps, have been used for a wide array of applications from defense, economic development, land and resource management, navigation, environmental impact assessment and human right protection. The map archives of the United Nations include a great variety of examples of how the United Nations and Member States have been used geospatial information for better decisions to delivery on its mandates and responsibilities.

Today in a digital era, geospatial information remains key to decision-making and is pervasive in various media and platform thanks to the rapid progress of information and communication technologies. Web mapping, precise navigation for human and other, like drone, development of digital twin, detailed and up-to-date imagery from the satellite, advanced geospatial analysis with AI are some examples of emerging technologies. We are witnessing the rapid progress of the technologies and industries. In these contexts, UN Secretariat set the Geospatial Strategy for the United Nations in 2021 that envisions the effective, efficient and universal use of geospatial information in support of all mandates and operations of the United Nations for a better world.

To reach this goal, challenges remain in bridging the digital data divide as many places in the world where the United Nations has to operate till lack data, is not accurate, reliable nor up-to-date. Further, it is in those areas that geospatial technology is not affordable to many international partners or Member States due to high cost which delays the operation momentum, resulting in undesired impact.

To develop innovative solutions, to implement technology and to train users to best assist in the implementation of its mandates, which is one of the goals of the Geospatial Strategy for the United Nations, we must leverage partnerships. The international symposium on Partnership for Technology in Peacekeeping and the UN Open GIS initiative have been serving as the impetus behind the development of new partnerships and partnership projects that have the potential to quickly impact peace operations and other operations. Throughout our collaborative UN Open GIS Initiative, we have learned that open source data, education and technology can support in the effective, efficient and universal use of geospatial information to support bridging the gap, in particular for providing accessible, user-orientated, and fit-for-purpose solution.

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Objectives:

The seminar will present the status of ongoing collaborative partnership with Member States, international organizations including United Nations agencies, academia, non-government and private sector in developing enhanced capacity of geospatial information and technology for United Nations operations and mandates. The seminar will also highlight ongoing efforts on how open source data, education and technology, in addition to the use of commercial software, can support in the effective, efficient and universal use of geospatial information with and for Member States and to deliver the insights to the United Nations in moments that matter most. The seminar offers an opportunity for those interested potential partners to learn the latest geospatial technological landscape in the United Nations operations, engage and share the good practices with participating stakeholders.

Provisional Agenda:

Opening Remarks (10 mins)

- Opening address by UN OICT
- Opening address by UN Open GIS (Prof. Maria Brovelli, Co-Chair of UN Open GIS Initiative, Politecnico di Milano)
- Congratulatory address (Permanent Mission of Japan to the United Nations)

Presentations (70 mins)

- Introduction to the UN geospatial strategy, innovation pathway, geospatial requirements, and UN Open GIS response (Mr. Kyoung-Soo Eom, Chief, UN Geospatial Information Section)
- Addressing data and technology gaps with open-source GIS. Education and technology.
 - UN Vector Tile Implementation, cooperation with Japan (Mr. Taro Ubukawa, UN Geospatial Information Section)
 - Discussion
 - Cloud Free satellite imagery, contribution from the Government of Finland (Mr. Pekka Sarkola, GISPO)
 - Discussion
 - Open Data, Education and capacity development
 - Open Data for the Sustainable Development Goals (Ms. Mina Lee, UN Geospatial Information Section)
 - Open education and capacity development for Member (Ms. Fleur de Lotus, UN Geospatial Information Section)
 - Discussion
- Way forward
 - Smart Maps for the UN and for all (Mr. Hidenori Fujimura, GSI, Japan and Chair of the Smart Maps Working Group of UN Open GIS)
 - Discussion

Conclusion and closing

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Platform and Registration:

The seminar will be held online (MS Teams meeting). To join the seminar, please send email to Mr. Taro Ubukawa (taro.ubukawa@un.org) at UN Geospatial Information Section and register by **27 February 2023**. The meeting link will be sent via email a few days before the seminar.