Concept Note for Special Session of Sixth Plenary Meeting of UN-GGIM-AP

1. Background

The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 that was adopted at the UN General Assembly in 2015 calls for the use of geospatial information technology for disaster risk reduction. In order to contribute to the implementation of the Framework from the geospatial information community, the UN Committee of Experts on GGIM set up Working Group on Disasters to develop a strategic framework on disaster management. Given that the countries in the Asia-Pacific region are prone to different types of natural disasters, including earthquakes, tropical storms, floods, and volcanic eruptions, UN-GGIM-AP also established a working group on disaster risk reduction to explore the potential roles of NGIAs through applications and services of geospatial information, and to develop a guideline on the use of geospatial information for disasters.

At the same time, one of the objectives of UN-GGIM-AP, as stipulated in Article5 (4) of its statutes, is "To foster and facilitate timely use and sharing of geospatial information among member countries for regional and global issues including disaster management." Before starting to share geospatial information among member countries, particularly for disaster management, however, it will be necessary to understand how NGIAs of member countries in the region engage in disaster management with what types of geospatial information and services at different phases of disaster cycle. While there may be different ways to facilitate such understanding, reviewing how a country has responded with geospatial information on a specific disaster case would help clarify the differences in disaster management of member countries, and facilitate the development of guideline.

2. Objective

This Special Session will focus on discussing potential roles of NGIAs by analyzing in detail a specific case of what the Geospatial Information Authority of Japan (GSI) did in response to 2016 Kumamoto Earthquake, which took place in Kumamoto Prefecture in Kyushu Island, Japan in April 2016. NGIA's roles and activities on disaster management may not be the same for different disasters. However, by sharing the detailed activities of GSI on a specific disaster, the participants will be able to identify those they would have done differently in their countries. While many of such differences may be originated from the differences in political, social, or institutional systems between member countries, there should be some areas the participants will be able to share and learn with each other as activities many NGIAs in the region could commonly engage in for their

countries. Therefore, the objective of this Session is not to find a single right way of responding to disasters or disseminate the GSI's way, but to identify common denominators that can be applied for NGIAs in the region in their responses to disasters. The outcomes of the Session will facilitate the development of guideline.

3. Preparation for the Session

One month prior to the Sixth Plenary Meeting of UN-GGIM-AP, a document that summarizes the GSI's disaster responses to 2016 Kumamoto Earthquake will be circulated. It will consist of five sections: introduction and pre-disaster activities; initial disaster responses; major disaster responses; recovery and reconstruction; and summary. The participants will be encouraged to read the document before attending the Plenary.

4. Organization of the Session

During the Special Session, the GSI's activities, including some of the key decisions GSI made, for 2016 Kumamoto Earthquake will be explained for each of the phases of disaster cycle as described in the document, and the participants will be invited to ask questions, comment on the GSI's activities, and share what they would have done.

5. Outcomes of the Session

The summary of discussions during the Session will be provided as an input to the future discussions and considerations on disaster risk reduction including those that are currently conducted in WG2 of UN-GGIM-AP toword the development of guideline and WG on Disasters of UN-GGIM.

Overview of 2016 Kumamoto Earthquake

An earthquake of Mw 6.2 (moment magnitude scale) occurred at 9:36 p.m. (Japan Standard Time) on Thursday, April 14, 2016. Its epicenter was located in Kumamoto Prefecture. Ground motions observed in the Kumamoto city were so strong that it was hard for people to keep standing straight. In addition, another bigger earthquake (Mw 7.0) hit Kumamoto area again at 1:25 a.m., Saturday, April 16 in about twenty-eight hours after the earlier earthquake. The damage caused by the second earthquake (main earthquake) was greater than those of the earlier. Fatalities resulting from the two earthquakes were as many as 211 (including quake-related deaths) and refugees were up to 180 thousand at peak period. Estimated total financial damage was 3.7 trillion yen and 195 thousand houses were totally or half damaged.