UNITED NATIONS **E/CONF.99/CRP.11**

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

Ninth United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for the Americas
New York, 10-14 August 2009
Item 5(b) of the provisional agenda
Country Reports

Actions taken on resolutions of the Eighth United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for the Americas*

* **Prepared by the UN Statistics Division, New York and PC-IDEA Secretariat, Mexico**

Actions taken on resolutions of the
Eighth United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for the Americas

UN Statistics Division, New York
and
PC-IDEA Secretariat, Mexico

This document has been prepared to summarize the follow-up actions taken on the resolutions adopted at the Eighth United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for the Americas (UNRCC-A), New York, 27 June- 3 July 2005. It is using a format that has been adopted and already used as a system for monitoring the status of actions taken on UN Regional Cartographic Conference's resolutions.

RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY THE 8th UNRCC-A	**STATUS OF ACTION**
1. Benefits of Developing a Spatial Data Infrastructure (SDI)	**STATUS OF ACTION**
The conference, *Taking note of* resolutions 1 entitled "Development Needs" and 7 entitled "implementation of national spatial data infrastructure in the Americas" adopted by the Eighth United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for the Americas, *Considering* that the development of spatial data infrastructures in the Americas is important for the sustainable social and economic development of the region, *Considering* also that the advancement of the such development has been slower than expected in some countries, *Recommends* that the national organizations or agencies in charge of the development of spatial data infrastructure in those countries should make an effort to secure the involvement of high-level government executives in the project, and to achieve this, the heads of those bodies should make visible the benefits of developing a good spatial data infrastructure for countries and for the region.	Based on country reports on SDI activities, submitted to the 9th UNRCC-A, many national cartographic/geographic information agencies have intiated the implementation of their national SDIs. Some have provided legal support in issuing laws and Presidential decrees (one of the most recent is the Brazilian Presidential decree, signed in November 2008) dealing with a mandate to build the corresponding SDIs. The general picture is that there is a growing development of NSDIs in the American Countries region..
2. Partnership approach in developing spatial data infrastructure	**STATUS OF ACTION**

The conference, *Noting* the ability of some countries to support the development of the spatial data infrastructure in countries of the Americas, 1. *recommends* that the countries of the region use the experiences of, and the resources generated by, other countries, 2. *Also recommends* the building of a partnership approach to the development of the spatial data infrastructure that follows the model of the Geocentric Reference System for the Americas (SIRGAS) project using bilateral cooperation.	A questionnaire was prepared by CP-IDEA Secretariat and sent to the members States. 16 countries sent the answers with no testimony documents. CP-IDEA will announce its recommendations to each country. Each country should mention any strategic alliances of cooperation with any other country (for example, the case of Atlas de Norteamérica). At the moment none country has announced any alliances of cooperation. Nevertheless, there is a regional initiative named Infraestructura de Datos Espaciales de la Comunidad Andina (IDECAN) with four members: Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador and Perú.
3. Training, Education and Spatial Standards	
The conference, *Recalling* resolution 2 entitled "Institutional capacity-building, education and training", adopted by the Eighth United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for the Americas, *Considering* general and specialized training needs, including the use of the new remote spatial data infrastructure class in Cuba or the Internet Global Positioning System (GPS) class of Finland as a model, *Recommends* that the Permanent Committee on Spatial Data Infrastructure for the Americas add a training section to its revised website and seek support for regional workshops. *Also recommends* that the Permanent Committee develop educational materials on the benefits of geographical data and mapping for cross-organizational consortia and other United Nations programmes, for example, sustainable development and national security, and ensure that its members attend non-geographical meetings at the United Nations and other forums to educate others about the value of spatial data infrastructure and geographical information; *Further recommends* that the Permanent Committee review, for adoption, the two draft reports and	The Permanent Committee does not have sufficient resources, and agrees to develop a training section to its revised website and seek support for regional workshops. The Permanent Committee has not developed educational materials on the benefits of geographical data and mapping for cross-organizational consortia and other United Nations programmes. The Vice-president got the two draft reports, but no adoption was made, instead, the Vice-president made this recommendation: The document "Compendium UNSDI and Implementation Strategy Paper" (174 pages) is the theoretical framework which underpins the SDI (Geospatial Data Infrastructure) of the United Nations. Therefore, it is estimated that CP-IDEA must take as a model the "Compendium" and write its own Cook Book. The White Paper "Governance of Technical Data Services Framework," (10 pages) of the UN Geographic Information Working Group (UNGIWG), describes the importance of the definition of key data, data models and implementation, and

the core standards document on spatial standards that have been prepared by the United Nations Geographic Information Working Group.	assigns primary importance to the establishment of the "Product Specification" (ISO 19131), metadata, and warehouse services, and ends by stating that for purposes of standardization, the framework of ISO 19000 is intended to summarize the best practices. Thus, it is recommended that CP-IDEA assess the feasibility of undertaking this task by following the guidelines of the UNGIWG.
4. Policy and reform	
The conference, *Considering* the disconnect between the spatial data producers and spatial data managers, 1. *Recommends* that the Permanent Committee on Spatial Data Infrastructure for the Americas, in coordination with the Permanent Committee on GIS Infrastructure for Asia and the Pacific and the United Nations Secretariat, develop a spatial data policy on standard mapping, spatial data infrastructure and metadata requirements to be presented to donor agencies, for example, the World Bank; 2. *Also recommends* that the members of the Permanent Committee on Spatial Data Infrastructure for the Americas provide information on national policy, law or specifications to post at the websites of the Permanent Committee on Spatial Data Infrastructure for the Americas and the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names.	No action was taken to establish the recommended contact between both Committees. No information on national policy, law or specifications was posted on the websites of the CP-IDEA and UNGIWG.
5. Outreach and related areas	
The conference, *Recalling* resolution 6 entitled “Contribution of the Permanent Committee on Spatial Data Infrastructure for the Americas (PC-IDEA)”, adopted by the Eighth United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for the Americas, *Considering* the low level of activities undertaken in recent years and the inability to sustain progress, *Recommends* that that the Permanent Committee on Spatial Data Infrastructure for the Americas meet more frequently, redefine goals and roles, and coordinate the development of its website;	In this ending period of four years it has not been possible to meet the CP-IDEA for working on the recommended issues; the only successful endeavour has been to redesign and develop its website. About this recommendation only some members have attended some of the named meetings. There are not positive results on seeking funds for a meeting to showcase the regional Spatial Data Infrastructure prototype.

Also recommends that that members of the Permanent Committee on Spatial Data Infrastructure for the Americas attend the upcoming meetings in Canada in June 2006, in Santiago in November 2006 and in Cuba in 2007, and other relevant meetings, and seek funding for a meeting to showcase the regional Spatial Data Infrastructure prototype.	

6. Global mapping and Second Administrative Level Boundaries projects	
The Conference, *Recognizing* that the availability of fundamental framework data set, such as national administrative divisions, are crucial for the analysis and management of socio-economic phenomena, *Welcomes* the efforts of the global mapping project and those of the UN Geographic Information Working Group Second Administrative Level Boundaries (SALB) project in the generation of global seamless data sets of importance for the Americas, *Recommends* that Member States, particularly through their national mapping agencies and notably with the help of the Permanent Committee on Spatial Data Infrastructure for the Americas and the Pan American Institute of Geography and History, support and participate actively in the Second Administrative Level Boundaries and global mapping projects by providing the necessary data and information they require, *Further recommends* member states in the Americas take full advantage of participating in the global mapping project for capacity-building to help establish national and regional spatial data infrastructures in the region.	No Member State has requested help from the CP-IDEA, neither for SALB or Global Mapping Project. CP-IDEA has not received any notice from Member States on this issue.
7. Geocentric Reference System for the Americas (SIRGAS) project	
The Conference, *Considering* the achievements of the Geocentric Reference System for the Americas (SIRGAS) project with respect to the establishment of a continental geodetic framework, *Recognizing* the efforts that have been undertaken by many countries of the Americas towards the development of the activities of the Geocentric Reference System,	

Noting that not all countries have integrated their spatial data infrastructure with the Geocentric Reference System or other compatible systems, *Considering* the ongoing efforts towards the establishment of a unique vertical reference system for the continent, *Bearing in mind* the necessity of a globally integrated system, 1. *Recommends* reinforcing resolution 4 entitled "Fundamental data: SIRGAS project" adopted by the Seventh United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for the Americas in 2001; 2. *Especially recommends* the integration of countries from Central America and the Caribbean into the Geocentric Reference System for the Americas (SIRGAS) project, 3. *Recommends* that all countries continue to work on the integration and dissemination of gravity and levelling data to support the unification of the height system.	The Vice-president delivered his report on 24 November 2008 Since February 2001, when SIRGAS was spread throughout the continent, the SIRGAS GTII is also responsible for the countries of Central America and the Caribbean. Regarding the above, SIRGAS member countries have been migrating their old networks to the SIRGAS System adopting it as the reference framework for each country, as indicates in this relation: Argentina, Bolivia, Brasil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guyana Francesa, México, Panamá, Perú, Uruguay and Venezuela.
8. Satellite data	
The Conference, *Recalling* the continuous development of satellite systems for obtaining global data by optical and radar sensors to a level that is of importance to national mapping requirements, extending from Landsat in 1972 to QuickBird in 2000 and from Seasat in 1978 to the Shuttle Radar Topographic Mission in 2000, *Recalling also* the planned future moderate- and high-resolution satellite sensor missions, *Considering* that satellite image data products can be used to an accuracy of one to several meters in the form of geo-rectified images or digital elevation models, *Considering also* that these products constitute a cost- and time-effective alternative to provide synoptic and geometrically correct map substitute products, to which existing map coverages may be fitted and updated, taking into account the Geocentric Reference System for the Americas as a geodetic framework, 1. *Recommends* that Landsat-like satellite missions be continued and that Landsat-like observation systems be considered for monitoring changing global environmental conditions;	At country level, it is worthnoting the experience of Brazil of non-commercial use of satellite imagery that can be emulated. Indeed, the current availability of low cost high-resolution satellite imagery at IBGE, Brazil, provided by the Japanese ALOS satellite mission, through non-commercial distribution nodes, represents an important source of data for the census geography activities. At UN level, the UN Cartographic Section has established systems contracts (recurrent contract for a duration of 1 year extendable up to 3 years) with the satellite image providers to supply satellite imagery and its applied products to the UN operations. These contracts are available for placing order to the UN Secretariat including its field missions as well as to all UN Agencies, Programmes and Funds. A systems contract established with SPOT Image is to supply high resolution

2. *Also recommends* that satellite data be made available openly at the cost of reproduction and dissemination or under conditions favourable to developing countries, as foreseen in the forthcoming Advanced Land Observing Satellite (ALOS) Mission, 3. *Further recommends* that global digital elevation data from the Shuttle Radar Topographic Mission C-band be made available from the National Geospatial Intelligence Agency of the United States of America at the highest possible posting for developing countries. .	(maximum resolution: 2.5 metre) satellite image and digital elevation model for mostly rapid mapping and geo-database development purpose. A systems contract with MDA Geospatial Services, Inc. is to supply very high resolution (from sub metre to 2 metre) satellite image (optical sensor) and high/medium resolution radar satellite imagery for mostly peace operations purpose.

9. Spatial data dissemination	
The Conference, *Recalling* resolution 7 entitled "Implementation of national spatial data infrastructures in the Americas", adopted by the Seventh United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for the Americas, in which the Conference recommended that Member States embrace the concept of national spatial data infrastructures and develop implementation strategies, *Recognizing* the need for a comprehensive spatial data dissemination policy in each Member State, *Noting* the difficulties faced by many Member States, aid and relief organizations and commercial enterprises in understanding the existing spatial data infrastructure in many Member States, *Noting also* the need for a spatial data dissemination policy to be an essential component of a spatial data infrastructure, *Recognizing* that the lack of a comprehensive and current spatial data dissemination policy is a cause of concern for development and disaster relief, *Recognizing also* the different needs of the public, commercial enterprises, relief agencies, non-governmental organizations and United Nations organizations, *Bearing in mind* the needs and objectives of each Member State, and the evolving nature of spatial data and emerging technologies and imaging platforms, 1. *Recommends* that Member States examine, review and set a comprehensive spatial data dissemination policy; 2. *Also recommends* that Member States freely distribute their spatial data dissemination policies; 3. *Further recommends* that Member States examine, review and set a comprehensive pricing policy in accordance with the needs and objectives of various organizations such as public and commercial enterprises, relief agencies, non-governmental organizations and United Nations organizations.	There is no advance on this recommendation. In other words, CP-IDEA has not received notice about it from any Member State.

10. Funding issues	
The conference, *Noting* the financial difficulties faced by many Member States in respect of the development of a basic national spatial data infrastructure, 1. *Recommends* that in various projects in developing countries supported by donor agencies, those agencies should also consider inclusion of financial support for the development of the spatial data infrastructure; 2. *Also recommends* that the donor agencies should set a policy in line with resolution 9 adopted by the present Conference for the long-term dissemination of, and public access to, the spatial data developed under such donor agency-supported projects.	There are some efforts provided by some donors (e.g. the World Bank for the establishment of some Land Information Systems in the America). Nevertheless, this is a standing recommendation that involves the share of responsibilities between recipient countries, PC-IDEA and the UN to bring it to the attention of the donor agencies.
11. Meeting on geospatial data infrastructure and information of the Americas for sustainable development	
The Conference, *Considering* that the Eighth United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for the Americas provided an excellent forum for the exchange of ideas, information and experiences on geospatial information, spatial data infrastructure and land management, *Recalling* that the United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for the Americas established the Permanent Committee on Spatial Data Infrastructure for the Americas, *Considering* that the United Nations, in collaboration with the Permanent Committee on Spatial Data Infrastructure for the Americas and the International Federation of Surveyors, and together with Mexico, had organized a special forum on development of land information policies in the Americas, held in Aguascalientes, Mexico, on 26 and 27 October 2004, *Recognizing* that countries of the Americas that are members of the Permanent Committee need to continue advancing the exchange of information on geospatial approaches and spatial data infrastructure in order to address key issues such as sustainable development and land management, *Bearing in mind* the financial limitations and importance of individual needs and approaches regarding geospatial information and spatial data infrastructure in the member countries, *Recognizing* that the United Nations Regional	No members of the CP-IDEA attended the Meeting in Canada in June 2006, with the exception of representatives of Canada, and Chile.

Cartographic Conference for the Americas encourages countries of the Americas that are members of the Permanent Committee to continue to exchange information, experiences and ideas concerning geospatial information and spatial data infrastructure, *Recommends* that countries members of the Permanent Committee be encouraged, to the extent possible, to attend a United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for the Americas-endorsed gathering in Canada in June 2006 to further the collaborative exchange of ideas, information and experiences on geospatial information and spatial data infrastructure of the Americas for sustainable development.	
12. Inter-regional meeting	
The Conference, *Considering* that spatial data infrastructures at the regional level are necessary as a support basis for information development within a framework of harmonized purposes, *Bearing in mind* that, at the regional level, spatial data infrastructures are under development in Europe, Asia and the Pacific, the Americas and Africa under the aegis of organizations such as EuroGeographics, EUROGI (European Umbrella Organisation for Geographic Information), the Permanent Committee on GIS Infrastructure for Asia and the Pacific, the Permanent Committee on Spatial Data Infrastructure for the Americas, and the Committee on Development Information of the Economic Commission for Africa, *Considering* the benefits to be derived from these organizations' working and developing the regional spatial data infrastructures within a framework of harmonized and integrated goals, 1. *Recommends* that the presidents, vice-presidents and secretaries of EuroGeographics, EUROGI (European Umbrella Organisation for Geographic Information), the Permanent Committee on GIS Infrastructure for Asia and the Pacific, the Permanent Committee on Spatial Data Infrastructure for the Americas, and the Committee on Development Information of the Economic Commission for Africa, hold a meeting with the purpose of evaluating progress in each region, examine common problems, propose solutions and define courses of action and policies, including possible means of cooperation, that would permit the harmonized development of the spatial data infrastructure for each subregion according to common objectives within a context of global integration that would be of benefit to all, with the particulars of the proposed meeting to be agreed by the five aforementioned organizations and the outcomes thereof to be reported to the	UNSD intends to organize a side meeting, gathering PC-IDEA, PCGIA and EUROGI, during the 9th UNRCA's framework, in order to discuss the terms of this recommendation.

United Nations; 2. *Requests* the United Nations Secretariat to assist, within available resources, in the preparation of such a meeting, including the identification of possible funding sources.	