

United Nations Nations Unies

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7 December 2011

Dear Mr. Prah and Mr. Ulgen,

On the occasion of the establishment of the United Nations Spatial Data Infrastructure (UNSDI) Steering Committee and the successful completion of its first meeting on 7 October 2011, I would like to congratulate the United Nations Geographic Information Working Group (UNGIWG) and the nine elected members of the Steering Committee, namely CTBTO, Global Pulse, OICT, UNDSS, UNEP, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNOOSA and WFP. I am pleased to learn that Mr. David Kaatrud of WFP has been elected to Chair the Steering Committee and that Mr. Andre Dehondt of UNDSS will be the Vice-Chair.

As you know, UNGIWG's commitment to advance geographic information management practices at the UN aligns well with the ICT Strategy for the UN Secretariat being implemented by the Office of Information and Communications Technology (OICT). OICT has the mandate from the General Assembly to harmonize UN system-wide ICT capacities and practice. It is in reference to that mandate that OICT is hosting the Centre of Excellence for UNSDI (CoE4UNSDI) Project which is being launched with voluntary contributions from UN Member States led by Australia.

I thank Mr. David Katruud and Mr. Andre Dehondt for their willingness to serve as Chair and Vice-Chair of the UNSDI Steering Committee, respectively. I trust they will lead the Steering Committee in an effective and collegial manner. In particular, as a former UNGIWG Co-Chair and currently the senior executive at WFP leading WFP's

Mr. Matjaz Prah
Mr. T. Suha Ulgen
Co-Chairs
United Nations Geographic Information
Working Group

spatial data infrastructure projects which are exemplary UN implementations, Mr. Kaatrud is well positioned to provide strategic guidance to the CoE4UNSDI Project which will take approximately two years to complete.

I will work closely with the UNSDI Steering Committee to create the visibility and support for the CoE4UNSD Project at the highest levels of the UN, including with HLCM and HLCP. I wish the UNSDI Steering Committee a very productive and fulfilling 2011-2013 two-year term.

Sincerely yours,



Choi Soon-hong
Assistant Secretary-General
Chief Information Technology Officer

cc: Mr. Salem Avan (UN/OICT)
Mr. Andre Dehondt (UN/DSS)
Ms. Sara Farmer (UN/Global Pulse)
Mr. Michael Godfrey (UNICEF)
Mr. David Kaatrud (WFP)
Ms. Mazlan Othman (UNOOSA)
Ms. Kimberly Roberson (UNHCR)
Mr. Ron Witt (UNEP)