

Notes on the 10th UNGIWG Plenary Meeting

on October 19 – 21, 2009

at United Nations Premises, Bonn, Germany

Executive Summary

The United Nations Geospatial Information Working Group (UNGIWG) brings together professionals in the fields of cartography and geoinformation sciences within the United Nations system in order to facilitate inter-agency cooperation and coordination. Members of UNGIWG consist of departments, specialized agencies, programmes, organs or offices of the UN system. Non-members can participate by invitation of the chair. UNGIWG operates by consensus and functions in a task-driven, goal-oriented and flexible manner as a network of professionals. Plenary Meetings are held once a year (<http://www.ungiwg.org>). Compared to UNGEGN (considered as a formal Expert Group), UNGIWG is considered as an “informal working group”.

At the 10th UNGIWG Meeting about 60 participants from about 15 (of the 30 registered) UN agencies and some observers (amongst others, from Google, OpenStreetMap, ESRI, OGC) were present.

The main topic discussed at this meeting was the way forward on how to formalize the UNSDI initiative within the UN system. Although UNSDI was established by UNGIWG as conceptual SDI framework for the UN (recognizing international SDI initiatives like INSPIRE, GMES, GEOSS, etc.) and standardizing bodies (like OGC), it has been identified that an “institutional home” for UNSDI is needed, regardless the valuable support and strong commitment of UNGIWG as a group. It was discussed controversially, whether or not the implementation of UNSDI can be supported by UN agencies without additional budget. During the meeting the direction UNGIWG shall continue its work seemed to be unclear to some members. Most UN agencies have different interests, different work processes established and more than 40 initiatives are already providing spatial information, which seem hardly to be chained to a services oriented architecture and to a liberal data sharing between UN agencies. A formal decision about the way forward of UNGIWG / UNSDI was postponed to the closed UNGIWG Session on Wednesday afternoon, October 21 (restricted to UN agencies only). As an outcome of the open sessions the “Centre of Excellence” of the “Chief Information Technology Officer” (CITO or OICT) will very likely be invited to take over the mandate and lead for the UNGIWG / UNSDI initiative in future.

One topic discussed intensively and associated to the formalization of the UNSDI initiative was the attitude of UNGIWG towards the Global Impact and Vulnerability Alert System (GIVAS) recently initiated (May 2009) by the Executive Office of the Secretary-General (EOSG). GIVAS is considered to play an important role in the near future and might be used as vehicle for raising awareness about UNGIWG and the UNSDI initiative.

Another crucial issue within the UN system seems to be the general data sharing behavior between some UN agencies. It is not a matter of tools for engineering and providing the data (e.g. with the geo-network tool provided by FAO; there are plenty of these tools available in the UN system). Most datasets which are needed are already in place, but very often access is restricted by the UN agency. One question came up quite often: “who / which of the UN agencies is ready to share data with each other?”.

During the meeting many UN inter-agency projects and initiatives supporting a UNSDI were presented using already GIS technology and sometimes even web services to coordinate and support e.g. the environmental disaster management and peace keeping operations. The UN Cartographic Section (UNCS) presented its tasks as well as its “strategic and other partnerships”, amongst others, with the Joint Research Center of the European Commission (JRC) concerning a “UN-EC gazetteer system”. UNGEGN was not mentioned in the presentation as partner of UNCS.

Generally UNGIWG states to address issues of common concern in the fields mentioned above and, amongst others, “[...] geographic naming conventions [...]” is mentioned on the UNGIWG website. During the breaks the UNGEGN objectives and tasks could be highlighted. However, UNGEGN seems not to be a “visible” partner for UNGIWG, due to the fact that geographical names are only one out of many issues UNGIWG has to deal with. Continuous awareness rising by UNGEGN is needed.

taken by Pier-Giorgio Zaccheddu,

Convenor of the Working Group on Toponymic Data Files and Gazetteers of UNGEGN

Monday, October 19, 2009**Opening (09:45 – 10:00)**Report of the UNGIWG Secretariat, by Mr. Lorant Czarán (Deputy Chair of UNGIWG)

- About 450 interested members as of today are on the mailing list.
- About 60 participants are attending the meeting in Bonn.
- The working language is English.
- Action list for discussion from last 9 Plenary Sessions is ready to be discussed at UNGIWG 10. Terms of Reference (ToR) have been slightly updated and will be discussed further within the closed UNGIWG session.
- Letter from UNECA was received asking UNGIWG participation in setting up a geospatial database to support climate activities at African Climate Policy Centre (ACPC). The African Union Commission (AUC), the Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) and the African Development Bank (AfDB) initiated the “ClimDev programme”, under which the ACPC was established to coordinate and strengthen policy response to climate change.
- UNGIWG informed about the participations at the UN cartographic conferences.
- Main topics for this meeting are the discussion on the way forward for UNGIWG and the UNSDI initiative, the contribution to the Global Impact and Vulnerability Alert System (GIVAS) by the Executive Office of the Secretary-General (EOSG) and the contribution to Climate change issues in general.

1st Plenary Meeting (10:00 – 12:15)

Report from Special Interest Groups (SIGs) and Task Groups (TGs):

Task Group 1 “Core Geo-Database”, by Mr. John S. Latham (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations – FAO)

- UNSDI framework and developments were presented.
- Common SDI principles for data standards, data formats, data sharing are recognized.
- Perusing the principles and guidelines framework on data products and services (prepared by Mr. Rob Atkinson on behalf of UNGIWG) are recommended.
- Candidate geo-spatial data layers have been defined: e.g. International and Administrative boundaries/units (GAUL – Global Admin Units Layer).
- LCCS 3 beta (Land Cover Classification System) based on LCML is available and has been submitted to the ISO/TC 211 Secretariat for approval; UML model for LCCS will be available soon.
- GLOBCOVER (GlobCover Land Cover) product based on ENVISAT MERIS data at full resolution from January 2005 to June 2006 is available.
- Harmonized World Soil database is available.
- E-Learning module on SDI was announced and will be published soon.

Special Interest Group “United Nations Boundary”, by Mr. Guillaume Le Sourd (United Nations Cartographic Section – UNCS)

- International Land Boundary (ILB, UNCS): gathers authoritative source information from the Member States.
- The rationale for ILB are treaty maps and texts, satellite imagery, treaty coordinates, desktop boundary extraction.
- Automated generalization to UNGIWG database can be done (15 to 1 million scale).
- Horizon 2009: currently more than 750 treaty maps, 400 supporting evidence maps, 7,000 treaty coordinates worldwide.
- Second Level Administrative boundaries (presented on behalf of Steve Ebener, WHO), SALB was launched through UNGIWG in 2001: the rationale are NMCA datasets, which are compiled, harmonized, validated, coded and published through the SALB portal.
- SALB updates in 2009: for 103 countries, historic changes updated for 48 countries.
- SALB perspectives 2010-11: significant push regarding release needed.
- International Maritime Boundaries (IMB): baselines, maritime boundaries (presented on behalf of UN Office of Legal Affairs, Division of Ocean Affairs and Law of the Sea), using official deposits from the Member States.

- 49 Member States made already full or partial deposit describing their baselines.
- Methods for gathering information for the Global Coastline (presented on behalf Bret Duncan, National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency) were presented; there are no political implications on the data layer, it serves as backbone only.
- Objective: a Global Boundary dataset is needed, composed by the products/datasets International Boundary, Second Administrative Level Boundary, Coastline information and the International Maritime Boundary.
- Discussion on how to integrate the “region” issue: who deals with questions like “Egypt belongs to Africa” or “... to Middle-East” or “... to East-Africa”? Such decisions have to be made on high political level and not within projects or within UNGIWG.

Task Group 3 “Map Production Guidelines”, telephone & desktop presentation by Ms. Akiko Harayama (Relief Map Centre of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs – OCHA)

- Objective is bringing together community of practice on mapping.
- Drafted Guidelines, Styles, Templates, Symbology are presented and can already be downloaded from the UNGIWG website.
- However, no substantial contributions by TG members so far.
- Discussion about whether or not this task group should continue its work. Continuation of the TG is supported by UNGIWG.

Task Group 4 “Interoperability”, by Mr. Mick Wilson (UN Environment Programme – UNEP, Nairobi, on behalf of Jeroen Ticheler – FAO)

- No structured activity to report since UNGIWG 9.
- General question about whether or not new Special Interest Group (SIG) should be established or whether the time-bounded Task Groups (TG) structure should be kept and extended.
- Regardless the question whether or not it is useful to have SIGs or TGs, however, UNGIWG should avoid to establish many “Micro-Projects” within UN agencies – which seem to happen quite often, and by that it risks to lose the coordination objective. Current TGs could e.g. migrate or become a SIG, if the topic is still valid.

Task Group 2 “Remote Sensing” and “Task Group 5” Global Navigation Satellites System – GNSS, by UNGIWG Secretariat

- No structured activity to report since UNGIWG 9.
- No reporting, i.e. these TGs will be considered to be disbanded.

Lunch Break (12:15 – 13:25)

Presentation on developments of OpenStreetMap:

- Examples of “quick mapping” by users, e.g. for the Gaza Strip area, for areas in Afghanistan, etc. are shown.
- Ongoing projects are: 1) Kibera slum-mapping (Nairobi, Kenya), 2) Where cam @ Africa GIS (Kampala, Uganda), 3) Mapping / workshop / community building (Kenya, Uganda, Mozambique).
- OSM is considered as “framework for data sharing and services”.

2nd Plenary Meeting (13:25 – 17:30)

Plenary discussion continues:

Report on the progresses on UNSDI development, by Mr. Dozie Ezigbalike (Economic Commission for Africa, Co-Chair UNGIWG)

- The Rationale for a UNSDI is presented, recognizing the existence of relevant expertise outside the UN: GSDI, INSPIRE, OGC, GEOSS, ICA, FIG, ESRI, Google, etc.
- It was clarified that SDI is not a project but that it is a framework for sharing data and services.
- However, organizations/agencies think and budget in terms of time-bound outputs. So far, no budget provision for tasks like coordinating and managing data resources for UNSDI has been made.
- Proposal: database and services components of new initiatives should adopt “UNSDI principles”.

- Weakness: UNGIWG is considered strictly to be an informal “working group”, more commitment and a budget should be requested.
- Option 1: “Centre of Excellence” of the Chief Information Technology Officer (CITO or OICT) should take over the lead for UNGIWG / UNSDI, but it does not have the mandate for GI products and services so far.
- Option 2: UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) and the Department of Field Support (DFS) to be approached to function as the Org Unit for UNGIWG / UNSDI, which currently has got the largest mandate for GI products and services.
- Need membership endorsement to initiate discussion.
- Controversial discussion on how UNGIWG should go further with the proposals/options of secretariat/UNECA about the “institutional home”: wait and validate vs. start actions with what has been achieved so far?

Statement from United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change – UNFCCC, by Mr. Kevin Grose (International Fund for Agricultural Development – IFAD)

- Most Member States joined an international treaty -- the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) - to begin to consider what can be done to reduce global warming and to cope with whatever temperature increases are inevitable.
- More recently, a number of nations approved an addition to the treaty: the Kyoto Protocol, which has more powerful (and legally binding) measures.
- The UNFCCC Secretariat supports all institutions involved in the climate change process, particularly the COP, the subsidiary bodies and their Bureau.
- UNFCCC receives precise instructions on tasks to do, it's a “treaty-body secretariat”. Biggest task of UNFCCC is creating documents for supporting UN bodies.
- The issues are comparable to UNGIWG: gather information, follow standards, provide information, etc. in the area of “Climate change”.
- Newly-joining agency to UNGIWG? No, at the moment there is no support and no resources available to jump into geographic information technology topics discussed by UNGIWG.

Introduction to the initiative “Global Impact and Vulnerability Alert System (GIVAS)” of EOSG, Video presentation, by Ms. Eva Busher (UNHQ EOSG) and by Ms. Susie Schaefer (seconded to the GIVAS team)

- The Global Impact and Vulnerability Alert System (GIVAS) was introduced by showing a movie (downloadable under www.youtube.com, FlashPlayer and JavaScript needed).
- Background: global crises have become more complex and are moving faster than ever before and awareness of the utility of rapid data collection for policy making (“data back in vogue”) increased.
- Current tools are outdated (“information gap”), but new technology is available.
- The added value of GIVAS is to get the “big picture on the crisis”, “cross-sectoral analysis”; support faster decision-making and help to make the UN a leader in innovation.
- GIVAS initiative/project started in May 2009 by “UN inter-agency agreement on concept note”
- First steps consist of a preliminary mapping of existing monitoring systems, scoping of potential partners, of outreach to Member States.
- The first “GIVAS Report” will be presented at the General Assembly (GA) and at the G20.
- Next steps consist of building a GIVAS team (by personnel secondment of UN agencies) and building a system for the provision of early crisis indicators, data collection tools, an analytical framework, technological interfaces.
- UNGIWG shall be used to understand the potential of “spatial information” for revealing dimensions and vulnerability.
- Discussion between UNHQ NY and UNGIWG via video conference:
Paradigms of UN need to be changed in order to fasten UN work processes; GIVAS could be a vehicle for this paradigm change because it has been started with high awareness by the Secretary General; Projects may be established together with UNU (UN University); New UNGIWG Task Group may be established to respond to detailed questions of the GIVAS team and to provide links to initiatives already existing; WHO results are not to be duplicated, the GIVAS focuses on bringing information and early warning systems together.

Written Statement from United Nations, by Mr. Choi Soon-hong (Assistant-Secretary-General – ASG/ the first Chief Information Technology Officer – CITO for the United Nations Secretariat)

- CITO network recognizes the UNGIWG activities.
- Mr. Suha Ulgan (United Nations Development Programme – UNDP) will coordinate CITO/OICT's efforts towards UNGIWG issues and represents CITO/OICT at the 10th UNGIWG meeting.

Geospatial Database for ClimDev's and African Climate Policy Centre – ACPC, by Mr. Dozie Ezigbalike (Economic Commission for Africa, Co-Chair)

- The Africa Climate Policy Centre (ACPC) aims to deliver on the ClimDev-Africa Policy Component and play the role of the overall "Programme Executing Agency". It is housed at the headquarters of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA).
- ClimDev-Africa is a regional programme initiated jointly by the African Union Commission (AUC), the UN Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) and the African Development Bank (AfDB), in collaboration with the Secretariat of the Global Climate Observing System (GCOS) to strengthen Africa's availability and use of quality climate information and services.
- Historical meteorological and hydrological data is recorded in proper databases.
- Proposal 1: UNGIWG membership to partner with UNECA as an UNGIWG/UNSDI bottom-up implementation example.
- Proposal 2: also to subscribe, through UNGIWG, to OGC for access to expertise and support on interoperability.

Presentation of the geospatial support of UN Secretariat activities, by Mr. Kyoung-Soo Eom (Chief of the UN Cartographic Section, New York)

- Presentation of the current infrastructure within the UN organization and of UN peace operations (DPKO, DKA & DFS) in 2009.
- UNCS mandate is to provide accurate and timely geospatial information in support of the decision-making and operational needs and to coordinate and support field mission GIS operations.
- Amongst others, the establishment of a "strategic partnership" with the project G-MOSAIC (within EU-funded GMES initiative) as well as with Joint Research Center of the European Commission (JRC) concerning UN-EC gazetteer system was presented! No "strategic", no "other partnership" with UNGEGN was mentioned!

Tuesday, October 20, 2009

3rd Plenary Meeting (09:30 – 12:30)

Plenary discussion continues:

Presentation on Open Geospatial Consortium membership for UNGIWG, by Ms. Athina Trakas (OGC Europe, Munich)

- OGC consists of 385 member organizations (from industry, government, academia).
- 28 adopted OGC standards do exist so far (some are ISO standards).
- OGC Vision: achieve the full societal, economic and scientific benefits integrating location resources into commercial, institutional and organizational processes worldwide. Serve the members as a global forum for and lead the development, promotion and harmonization of freely available geospatial standards.
- OGC Web Services (OWS) are presented and the html / xml standard encoding procedures explained.
- The standards development process is guided by the OGC Technical Committee Policies & Rules.
- "Consensus" is what the OGC standards process is all about! Avoid duplication, enhance cooperation.
- All OGC standards are implementable in software.
- "Principal membership" proposed for UNGIWG members.
- Proposal: cooperation within the "OGC Interoperability Program (OGC IP)". This is a proven process to rapidly develop, test and validate new standards based on real world use cases identified by OGC members (comprising testbeds, interoperability experiments, pilot projects). This OGC IP made the development of Sensor Web possible and resulted in the EC funding the "SANY" project under the 6th Framework Program.

Debate on guidelines and criteria for UNGIWG / UNSDI process (including projects & way forward)

- Discussion about the status quo and about the way forward, the institutional home, personnel and financial resources for UNGIWG / UNSDI.
- The majority/most active UN agencies are attending the UNGIWG meetings in order to discuss these issues. However, it seems to be unclear in which direction UNGIWG shall continue its work, considering that many UN agencies have different interests, different work processes and about 40 initiatives are already providing spatial information, which seem hardly to be chained.
- Question: "Who / which of the UN agencies is ready to share data with each other?"
- Comment by United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs – UNODA: UN Cartographic Section is proposed to become the leading agency for the UNSDI framework. However, a liberal data sharing approach is not supported by UNODA.
- Comment by FAO: GIVAS is an important project initiated and supported by EOSG; it will achieve a lot and can be catalytic, but it will come and go away again, so that it cannot be used to formalize the UNSDI initiative. Commitment is currently small, although UNSDI can be supported by UN agencies without additional budget. CITO should be invited to lead the UNGIWG / UNSDI initiative.
- Comment by UNGIWG Secretariat: an institutional home for UNSDI is needed, regardless the contribution and the strong commitment of UNGIWG as a group. GIVAS could be used for raising awareness about UNGIWG and the UNSDI initiative. The problem is the data sharing issue between UN agencies. This not a matter of tools for providing and engineering the data (e.g. the geo-network tool provided by FAO, there are plenty of these tools available). The datasets which are needed are already in place; UN agency's behavior makes the datasets restricted.
- A formal decision about the way forward of UNGIWG / UNSDI is postponed to the closed UNGIWG Session (restricted to UNGIWG full members only, i.e. registered UN agencies).
- Decision on the "GIVAS Task Group": about six UNGIWG members volunteered to participate in this GIVAS TG to be established by the end of the UNGIWG meeting. The group is requested to prepare a draft comprising objectives, timeline and a work plan for contributing to GIVAS. The draft shall be presented on Wednesday afternoon, October 21, 2009.

Lunch Break (12:30 – 14:00)Presentation of developments of GoogleMapMaker:

- examples of "quick mapping"(time lapse videos), e.g. for the Dominican Republic, Lahore Pakistan, etc., are shown.
- "Map Your World Discussion" is a forum open to everybody to post concerns and issues.
- Google imagery data may occasionally be out of date, but vector data can be very up to date. It is the aim to update the imagery data periodically. No definite timeline was communicated.
- "MapMaker Data Download" is already accessible for most African countries, i.e. Shape- und KML-files of many African countries can be downloaded.

4th Plenary Meeting (14:00 – 17:30)

Demonstrations on interoperability and web services:

Demonstration of UNEP interoperability and services, by Mr. Mick Wilson (UN Environment Programme – UNEP, Nairobi)

- "Publish-find-bind-model" of a functioning SDI (following a services oriented architecture, SOA) was introduced and explained. It comprises the direct integration of Data Discovery Services linked to Data Viewing Services linked to Data Provision Services, i.e. there is no "broker" in between.
- The "World Database of Protected Areas" was presented as a major component of a UNSDI. The database integrates several thematic layers into one GIS by using web services, like the "glacier layer" service compiled in the context of GEOSS.
- Main message conveyed: through web services the institutions collecting and maintaining valuable information do not lose the control of the original data. If the data is provided through web services other parties can integrate the data (or parts of it, made accessible according to different licenses) and use it for any decision-making.

Presentation of the “Global Risk Data Platform”, by Mr. Gregory Giuliani (UNEP/GRID-Europe & University of Geneva)

- Introduction of the “Global Risk Data Platform” is given. It shall support the “Global Assessment Report” process.
- The aim is to change the licensed software components with open source software components in future and to distribute and share all (historical) environmental data (disaster events) through one Geoportal using web services. By that interactivity, interoperability and new functionalities (cartographic, download and extract modules) are supported.
- GeoDB comprises about 10 GB of data on disaster events, 20 researchers are working on the platform.
- It is considered to be a “multiple UN agencies application”: UNEP, UNDP, ISDR and World Bank.
- The data shall also be provided to the EU (in the context of INSPIRE) as well as to GEOSS.
- A secured Geoportal version is designed by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR-net) using the GoogleMaps API for the user interface is presented.
- The (open) data layers are likely to be made publicly available through several OGC Web Feature Services in the near future.

Presentation of the SDI and Open Source Web GIS, by Mr. Paolo Pasquali (Information Technology for Humanitarian Assistance, Cooperation and Action – ITHACA, Torino)

- ITHACA provides solutions, amongst others, for merging different data sources into one application in the context of a SDI.
- ITHACA current activities are based on funded projects, such as “flood early warning system” application or a “snow coverage monitoring” application, etc.
- The project/initiative “SDI WFP” has been established to support the United Nations World Food Programme – WFP. It is to be tested soon.
- Solutions are designed for internal users/editors (LAN) and external users/editors (Internet).
- Open Source software is used instead of GoogleMaps API, e.g. PostgreSQL/PostGIS for the read-only-access through OGC Web Mapping Services.

Presentation of the UN-SPIDER-Knowledge Platform, by Mr. Marten Wills (ESRI)

- Presentation of satellite imagery services which can be accessed through ESRI geoportal.
- As soon as imagery data has been identified it can be displayed and processed further, e.g. with “GeoEye”.

Presentation of the Globalstar Services by Mr. Trevor Burns (Director European Sales, Globalstar HQ, Dublin)

- Globalstar is the largest provider of mobile satellite services. Over 350,000 subscribers in 120 countries.
- Services for the field work are provided, amongst others “Voice Satellite Services”, “Personal Tracking & Messaging” to stay in contact in remote locations.
- Customers are amongst others: UN High Commission for Refugees, UN Office for Project services, UN Mission Bosnia & Herzegovina.
- Most of Africa is not covered so far, but coverage by “Simplex” and “SPOT SATELLITE GPS Messenger” is expected soon.

Presentation of the MDA Geospatial Services by Mr. Clay Atcheson (MDA Geospatial Services, USA)

- MDA Geospatial provide satellite imagery through geospatial services on a contractual basis (lasting until 2011), including “50+” UN entities in order to support mainly UN peacekeeping missions and the UNDC in Afghanistan.
- New sensors have been added: WorldView-1, RADARSAT-2, GeoEye-1 and RapidEye (add data to UN contract by amendment if requested).
- MDA arranges trainings (e.g. in Brindisi 2010) focusing on Radar and RADARSAT-2 applications.
- “Order form” was added to the UN SPIDER website to expedite ordering and satellite asking appropriate to disaster response.

Presentation of “United Orientations to Smartness”, by Mr. Henrique Köhler (private inventor)

- Explains that the current orientation indicators like Geographical names, coordinates on maps are out of date and can be understood only by a small community.
- His target group consists of people who can divide the horizon into 12 directions (“Munich Orientation Convention”).
- Presentation of his tool “volksnav” on youtube or on his website: www.volksnav.com/mapplet .
- His tools are a global address coding system and establishes logical position codes like time horizons and radius information: ‘StatusQuo’ Bonn “M10:1 r30”.
- Proposes to use the “volksnav” system at the UN.

Wednesday, October 21, 2009**5th Plenary Meeting (09:30 – 11:00)**

Plenary discussion continues:

Debate on guidelines and criteria for UNGIWG / UNSDI process (including projects & way forward)

- The UNGIWG Secretariat proposed to establish a testbed as “OGC Interoperability Experiment” for a 6-month-timeline in order to test the currently existing web services provided by UN agencies and by that demonstrate the potential of a UNSDI. At the next UNGIWG meeting in December 2010 this approach and UNGIWG membership with OGC could be formalized.
- However, some UNGIWG members stated the risk to initiate too many “pilot projects” and/or “Testbeds”. These activities would need guidelines first, explaining the timeline and its objectives. It was agreed that these guidelines will be drafted soon by the TG “Interoperability”.
- Regardless the new activities the candidate geo-spatial data layers which have been defined and which are already available will be further supported and promoted by UNGIWG.
- It was announced that all formal decisions about the way forward of UNGIWG / UNSDI etc. will be made at the closed UNGIWG Session on Wednesday afternoon, October 21 (restricted to UN agencies only).

Joint Session of the UN SPIDER Workshop & 10th UNGIWG Plenary Meeting**Opening (11:00 – 13:30)**

No reporting.

Welcome notes were given by:

- Ambassador Mr. Rüdiger Lüdeking, Permanent Mission of Germany at the UN, Vienna.
- Ambassador Mr. Neville Gertze, Permanent Mission of Namibia, Berlin, Germany.
- Ms. Margitta Wülker-Mirbach, German Federal Ministry of Economics and Technology, Bonn.
- Mr. Johann-Dietrich Wörner, Chairman of the Executive Board, German Aerospace Center (DLR).
- Mr. David Stevens, Programme Coordinator, UN-SPIDER/UNOOSA, Vienna, Austria.

Keynote Plenary Presentations were given by:

- Mr. ??? (Deputy, on behalf of Luc Gnacadja, Executive Director), United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, Bonn, Germany.
- Mr. Carlos Sousa Oliveira (on behalf of Deberati Guha-Sapir, Executive Director), Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters, Brussels, Belgium.
- Mr. Lorant Czarán, Head of the UN SPIDER Office, Deputy-Chair of UNGIWG

Pier-Giorgio Zaccheddu
October 21, 2009