



International Symposium on Spatially Enabled Government and Society
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KLCC Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

CLOSING SPEECH

16 February 2012

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Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen

Good afternoon,

1. At the very outset, let me begin by congratulating the Department of Survey and Mapping Malaysia (JUPEM) for organising the *International Symposium on Spatially Enabled Government and Society*. I am indeed honoured to be here today to officiate the closing of this important symposium. I would also like to express my appreciation and gratitude to the participants from abroad and Malaysia for their contribution during this 2 day symposium. This indeed reflects your enthusiasm and commitment toward achieving spatially enabled government and society for the benefit of all stakeholders.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

2. As you are aware, the use of spatial information and technologies is witnessing an increasing trend worldwide including the Asia and

Pacific region. Spatial information and technologies has tremendous potential in the Asia and Pacific region since this region is home to 60% of the world's population. This vast region is complex, socially and politically with diverse national context, language, tradition and cultures. It spans across the globe from Iran in the West to French Polynesia in the East, Japan in the North and New Zealand in the South. Obviously, where spatial enablement is concerned, such vast diversity, presents issues and problems unique to every nation.

3. Thus, these issues and problems including individual experiences in solving them could be shared between member nations and resolved through deliberation in this symposium. Through the initiatives of the Permanent Committee on GIS Infrastructure for Asia and the Pacific (PCGIAP) - the regional grouping established in 1995 by a United Nations resolution to provide the required infrastructure for the Asia Pacific region - spatially enabled government has become part of the region's plan and intentions. In fact the plan requires the incorporation of institutional and structural reform in the use of spatial information coupled with spatial data infrastructure (SDI) as an enabling platform.

4. In this regards, I believe this symposium with the theme "Towards Spatial Maturity" has enabled member nations to understand the conceptual issues relating to both government and society better and to devise action plans that would lead to the eventual realisation of a spatially enabled government and society in all member countries. In this regard, it is heartening to note that this Symposium has discussed the role of Legal aspects, Network and Positioning Infrastructure, the

concept of Data Integration, Land and Property Information, and last but not least the role of Data and Information in realizing spatially enabled government and spatially enabled society.

5. In particular, spatial enablement which uses the concept of place and location to organise information and processes has many benefits in terms of improved decision making, reduced administrative costs and enhanced industry development opportunities. Thus spatial enablement as an innovator and enabler can empower governments to address issues and challenges based on comprehensive spatial information. Malaysia recognises this potential and has accorded priority to the use of geospatial information and technologies. Our aim is to achieve spatial maturity by the year 2020. This is crucial to ensure effectiveness and efficiency of our delivery systems to improve the people's well-being and achieve the status of a developed country.

6. I am happy to know the positive outcomes of this two day international symposium as well as the one-day expert group meeting. My Ministry together with JUPEM will further evaluate these outcomes and where appropriate will incorporate them into our strategic and operational plans.

7. In line with the our aim to achieve spatial maturity as mentioned above, JUPEM and the Malaysian Centre for Geospatial Data Infrastructure (MaCGDI) under the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment have formulated strategies to ensure better coordination and effective use of geospatial data. Towards this, currently, we are

working on a distinctive policy and legal framework to improve geospatial data management in the country. In this regard, the National Geospatial Act is being formulated to improve governance and control of geospatial activities undertaken by government agencies and the private sector in the country. The proposed Act will provide the legal framework for the development of a spatially enabled government and society.

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen

8. As I have emphasised earlier, it is very important for a nation to have ready access to all its spatial information to assist the nation in ensuring sustainable growth and to tackle issues related to the current economic slow-down, climate change, biodiversity conservation and agricultural production. Spatial data infrastructure and fundamental data are crucial in our quest for environmental resilience and sustainable development towards a developed country in line with Malaysian Vision 2020. The Government of Malaysia is fully committed towards providing the necessary infrastructure for the sharing of spatial information and in eventually establishing a spatially enabled government through its various projects in the Development Programs of its various agencies.

9. As the Minister responsible for geospatial development, I see the need for the government to coordinate the deployment of geospatial and technology and the adoption of standards across all government agencies. In this regard, I am glad that JUPEM and MacGDI are playing a central role in the coordination of these efforts.

10. JUPEM being the main provider of geospatial data in Malaysia, providing cadastral and topographic fundamental datasets, will implement Kuala Lumpur Declaration which emphasized the importance of having comprehensive fundamental data and information and that the data has the force of law, the authority, the currency and the accuracy as well as readily accessible and usable. These data and information needs to be collected, updated, analysed and shared and the resulting spatial information represented and communicated to underpin effective delivery system, governance, public safety and security and well-being of the people and environment.

11. We also fully support all efforts and initiatives made by the Permanent Committee on GIS Infrastructure for Asia and the Pacific (PCGIAP) in assisting nations in the region to make the implementation of the concept of Spatially Enabled Government a reality. The Kuala Lumpur Declaration acknowledges that spatial enablement should not remain a concept. It must be advanced to unlock the wealth of the existing knowledge about the environment, its legal and economic situation, its existing and potential resources, its historical and future use, its ownership and custodianship that are foundational towards informed policies, frameworks, decisions and actions. Thus, it is with very great honour that I, on behalf of the Government of Malaysia, hereby accept the 2012 Kuala Lumpur Declaration as part of Malaysia's agenda for a spatially enabled Government and Society.

12. Based on this declaration, the National Mapping and Spatial Data Committee will formulate a national action plan to implement the Declaration. At the same time, I hope the foreign delegates to this Symposium would present this document to their respective governments and advise them especially within the 56 PCGIAP jurisdictions on the hope and the aspiration of this declaration.

13. I also hope that this declaration will be submitted to the United Nations Committee on Global Geospatial Information Management (GGIM) so that the global geospatial committee could consider the relevance of this declaration. This is important as GGIM is a major initiative to bring all the governments in the world together to evolve common practices in the adoption and deployment of geospatial information practices. I hope that in due course GGIM will be able to provide greater guidance to the countries in providing their geospatial information infrastructure and practices.

14. Before I end my speech, I wish to extend my appreciation and gratitude to the organizing committee, sponsors, delegates, speakers, participants, exhibitors and those concerned for their hard work in making this symposium a success.

15. On this note, I declare the International Symposium on Spatially Enabled Government and Society officially closed.

Thank you.