

Press Release

UN Centre of Excellence in Geodesy in Bonn, Germany ceremonially opened

New United Nations Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence coordinates the development of a global geodetic infrastructure

Important milestone for global cooperation in geodesy, the science of surveying and mapping the earth's surface: The United Nations Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence (UN-GGCE) at the UN Campus in Bonn will be officially opened today, March 29, 2023.

The most important task of the UN-GGCE is to coordinate the development of a permanent globally government-coordinated geodetic infrastructure. This infrastructure includes, for example, observation stations around the world and data and analysis centers. It is of central importance for earth observation and navigation applications as well as for socio-politically relevant topics such as stable living conditions, climate change, land use or even safe autonomous driving.

Juliane Seifert, State Secretary of the German Federal Ministry of the Interior and Community:

“With the help of the UN-GGCE, we will be able to record and monitor changes in sea level or the movement of the earth's crust more quickly and accurately in the future. With the UN-GGCE, the German government supports the implementation of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and thus creates an elementary building block for improving Earth observation and positioning.”

Peter Thomson, UN Special Envoy for the Ocean: *“All the best, and congratulations to you and colleagues on delivering the UN-GGCE Centre of Excellence. From Svalbard to the Outback of Australia, from melting ice caps to rising sea levels, the whole world stands to benefit from constant improvement of, and investment in, our geodetic infrastructures.”*

Prof. Dr. Paul Becker, President of the German Federal Agency for Cartography and Geodesy:

“Many geodetic tasks, such as the permanent observation and calculation of satellite orbits as a basis for navigation applications, can only be tackled jointly. The UN-GGCE will help countries – especially developing countries – improve national contributions and promote the open exchange of data and observation results.”

Ambassador Dr. Rainer Lassig, representing the German Federal Foreign Office, welcomes the opening of the UN-GGCE as the 26th United Nations facility on the UN Campus in the Federal City of Bonn establishment proves that Germany will continue to be an attractive partner in 2023, when it celebrates 50 years of membership of the United Nations, Germany remains an attractive location for international organizations.

The UN-GGCE is part of the 'Department for Economic and Social Affairs' (DESA) of the United Nations, based in New York. The concrete work plan at the UN Campus in Bonn initially covers three years.

The Federal Agency for Cartography and Geodesy, as the higher federal authority in the portfolio of the Federal Ministry of the Interior and Community, with its worldwide recognized expertise in geodesy, will support the tasks of the UN-GGCE with personnel resources as well as providing funding.

Background information on the Federal Agency for Cartography and Geodesy (BKG):

The BKG is an authority in the portfolio of the Federal Ministry of the Interior and Community (BMI). It functions as the central service provider of the federal government and competence center for geoinformation and geodetic reference systems. BKG deals with the observation, data storage and the analysis, as well as the combination and provision of geospatial data. Federal institutions, public administration, business, science – and almost every citizen in Germany benefit from the work of BKG. Experts from a wide range of fields such as transport, disaster prevention, homeland security, energy and the environment use geospatial data, maps, reference systems and information services from BKG for their plans and investigations. BKG operates a service center in Leipzig as well as geodetic observatories in Germany and abroad. For more information, see www.bkg.bund.de.

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