

## **Terms of Reference of the Geodetic Reference Frame for the Americas (GRFA) Working Group of the United Nations Regional Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM:Americas)**

### **1. OBJECTIVES OF THE GRFA WORKING GROUP**

#### **1.1. GENERAL**

- 1.1.1. To support the Nations of the Americas in response to the United Nations General Assembly Resolution entitled “A Global Geodetic Reference Frame for Sustainable Development” (A/RES/69/266<sup>1</sup>) under the recommendations of the United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM) Subcommittee on Geodesy (UN-GGIM SCoG<sup>2</sup>), and the scientific guidelines issued by the International Association of Geodesy (IAG<sup>3</sup>) and Geocentric Reference System for the Americas (SIRGAS<sup>4</sup>).
- 1.1.2. To coordinate and assist Member States’ efforts to ensure the sustainability and enhancement of the GRFA, as a crucial enabler of spatial data interoperability, disaster risk mitigation, and sustainable development.
- 1.1.3. The Working Group will be called the Geodetic Reference Frame for the Americas (GRFA) Working Group of the Regional Committee of United Nations on Global Geospatial Information Management for the Americas (UN-GGIM: Americas<sup>5</sup>) and abbreviated to only GRFA Working Group.

#### **1.2. SPECIFIC**

- 1.2.1. To assist and recommend to the Nations of the Americas appropriate governance structures for implementing the GRFA.
- 1.2.2. To support and recommend to the Nations of the Americas proper standards and guidelines for implementing the GRFA.
- 1.2.3. To encourage cooperation among the Nations of the Americas to address infrastructure gaps and avoid duplications of efforts towards the development of a more sustainable GRFA.
- 1.2.4. To promote and provide mechanisms for capacity development and knowledge transfer in the field of geodesy among the Nations of the Americas through supporting technical workshops and symposiums organized by SIRGAS and other institutions.
- 1.2.5. To make the global and Pan-American geodetic reference frames more visible and understandable to society.
- 1.2.6. To serve as a conduit between the representatives of UN-GGIM SCoG and Geodetic Reference Frame Working Groups from the other UN-GGIM Regions.

1 [https://ggim.un.org/documents/A\\_RES\\_69\\_266\\_E.pdf](https://ggim.un.org/documents/A_RES_69_266_E.pdf)

2 [https://ggim.un.org/documents/Subcommittee\\_on\\_geodesy-Terms\\_of\\_Reference.pdf](https://ggim.un.org/documents/Subcommittee_on_geodesy-Terms_of_Reference.pdf)

3 <https://www.iag-aig.org/>

4 <http://www.sirgas.org/en/>

5 <http://www.un-ggim-americas.org/en/contenido/estatuto/pdf/STATUTES%20JANUARY19-2.pdf>

- 1.2.7. To serve as a collective of subject matter experts for the broader UN-GGIM: Americas regional committee on all geodetic matters. Recommend representatives of the Americas to serve the UN-GGIM SCoG.
- 1.2.8. To coordinate and assist the scientific efforts of SIRGAS and other American institutions in the implementation of many of the above specific objectives.
- 1.2.9. To promote that SIRGAS generates new strategic partnerships in the scientific field to ensure that the GRFA is accessible for implementation in all regions of the Americas, including Nations that are not active members of SIRGAS.

## **2. COMPOSITION**

### **2.1. MEMBERS**

- 2.1.1. Membership is open to all the Member States of the Americas<sup>6</sup>. They may designate national delegates (representatives) and alternates to participate in the GRFA Working Group.
- 2.1.2. To be aligned with the UN-GGIM SCoG, in appointing their national delegates, Member States should seek to designate representatives with specific knowledge of and responsibility for implementing national geodetic reference frames for positioning, navigation, and timing applications. The GRFA Working Group will also seek to utilize representatives' skills in management, administration, and communications to deliver key elements of its work program. Consideration should include how the national representatives coordinate inputs from all interested parties within their national system, including but not limited to official mapping agencies, national and international space agencies, and governmental and non-governmental research institutes.
- 2.1.3. Considering the general objective described in 1.1.1., Member States are encouraged to participate in SIRGAS with national representatives in order to work on the development of scientific guidelines for the Americas.
- 2.1.4. Each national delegate may nominate additional subject matter experts to attend meetings of the GRFA Working Group. These attendees have no voting rights.

### **2.2. OBSERVERS**

- 2.2.1. Observers may be invited to meetings and contribute to the GRFA Working Group, including from other institutions, professional, research, and academic organizations or associations interested in geodetic programs. Notification of the observer should be sent to the co-Chairs of the GRFA Working Group before meetings. The observers have no voting rights.

### **2.3. CO-CHAIR**

- 2.3.1. SIRGAS' President and Vice-president will serve as co-Chairs of the GRFA Working Group.

## **3. RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS**

### **3.1. MEMBERS**

- 3.1.1. Members will endeavor to attend all the GRFA Working Group meetings.

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.un.org/en/member-states/index.html>

- 3.1.2. Members will take actions to develop and promote the SIRGAS' and the GRFA Working Group's activities in response to the General Assembly Resolution entitled "A Global Geodetic Reference Frame for Sustainable Development" (A/RES/69/266).
- 3.1.3. Members will represent the GRFA Working Group in specific functions or at events with the approval of the co-Chairs.
- 3.1.4. Each Member State participating in the GRFA Working Group will have one vote. Members will typically vote by show of hands or by email when participating virtually.
- 3.1.5. The Members should promote the recommendations from the GRFA Working Group within their Member State. They will consult on implementation of the recommendations, dependent on circumstances such as member's national rules, laws, and administrative practices. Members may request considerations, amendments, or modifications to the GRFA work plan, reports, and Terms of Reference.
- 3.1.6. Members may request changes to the event agenda for the GRFA Working Group meetings.

### **3.2. CO-CHAIRS**

- 3.2.1. SIRGAS' President and Vice-president will serve as co-Chairs of the GRFA Working Group.
- 3.2.2. The co-Chairs will preside over meetings of the GRFA Working Group.
- 3.2.3. The co-Chairs will manage the objectives and activities defined on the GRFA work plan facilitated by the GRFA Working Group.
- 3.2.4. The co-Chairs will represent the official intergovernmental geodetic interests of all nations of the Americas.
- 3.2.5. The co-Chairs will serve as a liaison between SIRGAS and UN-GGIM: Americas.
- 3.2.6. The co-Chairs will be responsible for the event agenda for the GRFA Working Group meetings in consensus with the Members. The event agenda should be sent to the Members not later than one month before a meeting.
- 3.2.7. The co-Chairs will declare the opening and closing of each GRFA Working Group meeting, direct the discussion at such meetings, ensure observance of these Terms of Reference, grant the right to speak, put questions to the vote and announce decisions. They will rule on points of order and, subject to these rules of procedure, will have complete control over the proceedings.
- 3.2.8. The co-Chairs will ensure the recording of appropriate minutes to document the proceedings.
- 3.2.9. The co-Chairs will promote the General Assembly Resolution entitled "A Global Geodetic Reference Frame for Sustainable Development" (A/RES/69/266) and the implementation of the "Road Map for the Global Geodetic Reference Frame for Sustainable Development" developed by the UN-GGIM Working Group on the Global Geodetic Reference Frame and published in 2016.
- 3.2.10. The co-Chairs will present GRFA and SIRGAS Work Plans and Annual Reports at the UN-GGIM: Americas meetings.
- 3.2.11. The co-Chairs may act as Member States representatives at the GRFA Working Group. In this case, they will have one vote each, and will typically vote by show of hands or by email, when participating virtually.

## **4. MEETINGS**

- 4.1. The GRFA Working Group will meet at least twice per year, and the co-Chairs will select the date and location. Meetings may be virtual or some combination to facilitate participation. A simple majority of the GRFA Working Group must attend to form a quorum.
- 4.2. The GRFA Working Group meetings will attempt to be concurrent with the SIRGAS annual meetings as well as during sessions of the UN-GGIM-Americas.
- 4.3. The GRFA Working Group decisions will be taken by a simple majority vote of the representatives present, whether in person or virtual. Members will typically vote by show of hands or by email when participating virtually.
- 4.4. Meetings and the meeting agenda will be announced at least one month in advance for the consideration of the Member States delegates.

## **5. FINANCING, FUNDS, AND EXPENSES**

- 5.1. Members, their delegations, and other representatives participating in all GRFA Working Group activities will not receive reimbursement for travel or expenses associated with participation.

## **6. LANGUAGE**

- 6.1. English will be the working language of the GRFA Working Group.
- 6.2. GRFA Working Group approved documents will be written in English and translated to Spanish and French.