

Mr. Chairperson,  
Distinguished delegates,  
Ladies and gentleman,

The year 2007 is relevant for Romania! At 1<sup>st</sup> January we became Member State of the European Union and important political decisions have taken in order to increase the Romanian contributions to the problems that humanity is facing. In this context, Romania based on past cooperation activities on the frame of GMES (Global Monitoring for Environment and Security) decided to join the Group of Earth Observation and actively contribute to the Global Earth Observation System of Systems (GEOSS).

GEO Report on Progress (RoP) shows that real progress has been made on coordination, comprehensive and sustained Earth observations and new ambitious targets are planned. Romanian participation to such vital goals is based on national policies targeting sustainable growth and development; and I would like to mention here the National Plan of Reforms 2007-2010 and the National Plan for Research, Technological Development and Innovation 2007-2013.

Romania is fully committed towards GEO objectives and implementation plans and our participation in this global initiative is complementary to other international programs and projects in which Romania is participating.

As other countries in the world, Romania is facing difficult moments due to natural disasters. Floods, landslides, earthquakes and medium term calamities severely affected our country during the last decades. We are confident that space technology is bringing unique capabilities in order to reduce disaster losses and GEO should provide the response of the mankind to bring stability to such global and local issues.

I would like to inform that Romania is deeply involved by medium and long term programs, at national and international level, towards disaster reduction and, in particular, space technology assistance for disaster management.

At the global level, Romania was involved as a main actor within the United Nation Committee on Peaceful Uses of Outer Space initiatives. Romania organized the regional UNISPACE III Conference for Europe and the United Nation Conference on Space Technology for Disaster management. Since 2001, Romania was leading the implementation action group for the United Nation initiative to build the Platform for Space-based Information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response (SPIDER).

At European level, Romania is acting mainly as a European Space Agency cooperating member state towards the space technology development and – by

means of the EU RTD Framework Programs 6 and 7 – as an appropriate actor to build the GMES infrastructure and services.

I am confident that the endorsement of the Declaration of Cape Town will bring new hope towards the economic progress and to the welfare of the humanity.

Allow me to take this opportunity to thank the South African authorities, in particular to the Ministry of Science and Technology for the warm welcome and for hosting this important event.

Anton ANTON  
President  
National Authority for Scientific Research  
Romania

Cape Town,  
30 of November 2007