

Ambassador Leonardo Arizaga, Head of Delegation



**Misión Permanente del Ecuador
ante la ONU y otros Organismos Internacionales
Ginebra - Suiza**

Thankyou Mr. Chairman,

I have the honor to speak on behalf of the Government of Ecuador as a new Member of the Group on Earth Observations (GEO), thank you for your kind words welcoming us to GEO's family. I extend our thanks as well to the People and Government of Mexico for its gracious hospitality. There is no better place to begin officially our GEO membership than here, in Mexico, celebrating together with brothers and sisters of our bigger homeland, Latin America.

Two years ago, when Ecuador applied for Observer Status to GEO my country was already convinced of the relevance of this young but vital international organization. Knowledge, science, technology and innovation - as drivers of wealth- and means for equal and fair distribution of the benefits arising from it- are fundamental pillars for "Peace", the name we use for development and Good living.

Global data and information generated by comprehensive, coordinated and sustained observations of the Earth play an important role for sound decision-making, and are fundamental to design and implement policies and programs to overcome social and economic challenges and attain sustainable development.

It is also important to place a particular emphasis on dialogue between producers and users of data and promote the allocation of sufficient resources by States and international cooperation agencies in order to compile pertinent, timely and reliable information.

To that end, we have established a research university that promotes innovation in the heart of Yachay, City of Knowledge in Ecuador. Among the areas of strength of science and technological specialization of Yachay, the schools of Information Sciences and Technology and Geological Sciences and Engineering are relevant to GEO's Work Programme. We look forward to future cooperation to expand its network for interaction and open data.

Mr. Chairman,

We congratulate GEO for its first decade of remarkable work developing this unique international partnership that not only advocates for continued and expanded earth observations. It also strives to identify data needs, ensuring access to multiple sources, while promoting standards and interoperability among available data, and transforming that information into knowledge, which can be used to generate products and services for end-users.

We encourage GEO to continue its endeavor to identify critical gaps in existing observational networks with particular focus on the needs of developing countries, the need for continuity of observations, the need for increased development of in-situ networks, and the potential benefits of enhanced observing systems.

Finally, we look forward to further strength our collaboration and coordination in the four Societal Benefit Areas identified by the AmeriGEOSS initiative, mainly agriculture and food security, disaster risk reduction, water resource management, and biodiversity and ecosystem monitoring.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.