

Keynote speech of Jianlin Cao at Geneva Ministerial Summit

Honorable Ministers Bruno Oberle,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good morning.

It is my great pleasure to be invited to attend the Third Ministerial Summit on Earth Observations, as the GEO co-chair representing the Asia-Oceanic region and the head of Chinese delegation. Please allow me, on behalf of Asia-Oceanic GEO members, including the Chinese government, to extend warm congratulations on the opening of the Summit, and express my sincere thanks to Swiss Federal Government for holding the Summit.

The Summit held today serves as a major link between the past and the future, as it will make GEO enter into a new decade of development after 2015, and become a milestone in the process of the GEO history.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We are very glad to see that great achievements have been made from 2005 at the initiate of GEO, through the practicing of GEOSS ten year implementation plan (2006-2015), which focuses on worldwide GEOSS construction and plays an important role on organizing and coordinating earth observation technologies applied in the nine societal benefit areas.

Through over 9 years of development, GEO has grown into an organization comprising 91 member countries and the European Union, and 77 participating organizations. GEO currently has been the biggest and the most authoritative intergovernmental organization, which centers on worldwide GEOSS construction and plays an important role on organizing and coordinating earth observation technology applied in the nine societal benefit areas.

GEO initiatives of GEOGLAM、GFOI、GEONETCAST have made important progresses. Especially data sharing targeted GEONETCAST, including CMACast, plays as one of the keys to GEOSS infrastructure. Outstanding improvement of data sharing has been taken after the publishing of Beijing Declaration. Meanwhile, GEOSS implementations in levels of global, region and nation have gained great progress, such as GCI, AfricGEOSS and ChinaGEOSS. New version of GEO Portal was put online and the accessible resources has reached to 65 millions. Besides the above, training activities have been taken in GEO member countries and participant organizations. Well prepared training courses covered more than 1500 peoples from 90 countries around the world.

In the Asia-Oceanic region, earth observation of the member countries has developed rapidly in GEOSS framework. Earth observation capability in China, Japan, Korea, India, Thailand , Australia, and other member countries has been further strengthened. Service scope of earth observation data sharing has been largely expanded at regional level. Many Earth observation satellites have been included in the development and launch plans. International cooperation among member countries and relevant international organizations has become closer on earth observation applications in nine societal benefit areas. In response to natural disasters, such as

the forest fire in Australia, the summer flood in northeast China and the Haiyan typhoons in Philippines, the cooperation among relevant countries and international organizations achieved significant results.

In short, GEOSS has become a well-accepted and irreplaceable tool to support decision-making in sustainable development, by the joint effort of GEO member countries and European Union and participating organizations.

Ladies and gentlemen!

The demand of a sustainable earth is becoming stronger as global economy and society develops rapidly. We should recognize that there is still a deep gap between GEOSS progress and demand of sustainable development. Meanwhile we should recognize that it is GEO's responsibility and also opportunity to mitigate the gap. Geneva Declaration with the topic of integrating observations to sustain the earth to be approved by the Ministerial Summit today will decide to initiate the second 10-year GEOSS implementation plan. We believe it will accelerate and sustain GEOSS development, thus fulfill the ever-growing demand. We believe it is the common will of all GEO members and participating organizations. Chinese government approves Geneva Declaration completely and commits to make more contribution to GEO.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

This ministerial summit will launch the <Geneva Declaration> soon, which will be the guideline for the next 10 years of GEO and GEOSS implementation. We wish that, when we define the new 10 years plan of GEOSS, we could,

Firstly, follow the <Geneva Declaration> guidance, inherit the excellent outcome and successful experience that we had in the past, this will help transfer to the next new phase of development of GEO and GEOSS.

Secondly, further enhance the role of GEO governmental members, under GEOSS framework, improve the investment on Earth observations in its own country and contribute more substantiality to GEOSS implementation.

Thirdly, from the time and space dimension, the GEOSS implementation and development shall be considered at three scales, global, regional, and national level. That needs take into account not only the same framework and system, but also the regional and national characteristics, cares about not only requirement of the global development, but also requirement of national requirement itself.

Fourthly, we shall concern more about involvements of the development countries, this is not only to improve their capacity building, but, most urgently, to improve their observation data and remote sensing application products service level, motivate their enthusiasm involving in the GEOSS implementation, ultimately realize the GEOSS aim.

Lastly, let's calling for enhancing the collaborations, with all the member counties and participating organizations of GEO, finalizing the development aims, initiating the implementation actions for the new GEOSS ten years' plan as early as possible. We need also to improve our abilities for the GEOSS development and building, further strengthen the utilities of the GEOSS to improve the national and even the regional societal and economy sustainable development speed, so that could help implement GEO's aim early.

Thank you!