

Final
November 5, 2010

Statement by IEEE to the GEO Ministerial Summit, Beijing
November 5, 2010

Madam Chair, Ministers, Distinguished Delegates, Colleagues and Friends:

IEEE, The Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers, thanks the Government of the People's Republic of China for hosting the GEO Summit, and congratulates the Group on Earth Observations on its significant accomplishments over the past five years. IEEE is delighted and honored to be a Participating Organization in GEO, and is especially pleased to hold a leadership role through the positions of Co-Chair of the Architecture and Data Committee and Co-Chair of the User Interface Committee, as well as through our role as providers to the GEOSS Common Infrastructure.

Madam Chair, in order to understand why we in IEEE feel such strong resonance with the mission of the Global Earth Observation System of Systems, it suffices to compare the mission statements and taglines of our organizations. The tagline of GEO says "Information for the Benefit of Society." The tagline of IEEE says: Advancing Technology for Humanity. Clearly our goals and our missions are aligned.

As the world's largest technical professional association, with close to 400,000 members in 160 countries, the IEEE is a resource for expertise in engineering, science, computing, information technology, and technical and engineering education. Our strength, on which we call GEO to draw, is our strong, diverse and geographically dispersed army of volunteers. Through our worldwide membership, technical expertise, and deeply rooted tradition of volunteerism, IEEE can help expand the local technical capacity for sustaining GEOSS. In fact, Madam Chair, in almost every country that is represented here, IEEE has a local organizational unit comprised of technical experts, practitioners, academics and students, and we stand ready to engage these local units in the activities of GEO as needed.

Madam Chair, as the 10-Year Implementation Plan states, interoperability is essential for the success of GEOSS. IEEE, which is also a world-recognized standards organization, is a leader in the arena of interoperability within GEO. We are pleased to inform this body that we plan to continue and extend our support for the Standards and Interoperability Forum and for the Standards Registries. We offer IEEE's Standards Association, working with ISO, OGC and other international organizations, to develop the new standards that are so critical for broadening interoperability.

The IEEE is also committed to bringing its global resources to bear in engaging a wide audience, including young people. I am pleased to inform that EARTHZINE, the web magazine we created for GEOSS, continues to expand. It was read in 145 countries this last month. We are also publishing J-STARS, a peer-reviewed journal for GEOSS and the

Final

November 5, 2010

applications of Earth observation. The global series of GEOSS WORKSHOPS, sponsored by IEEE in collaboration with OGC, ISPRS, CEOS, NASA, NSF, and others, has brought together and energized the leadership in many GEOSS societal benefit areas and communities of practice.

Madam Chair, our work does not stop there. Through GEOSS, we have implemented “Water for the World,” for applications to the critical issues of water availability and access. In the Capacity Building video last evening, you saw one of our projects “Water Harvesting in India.” We are also focused on capacity building in the broader sense. To help at a global level, IEEE will register our education programs with GEO GCI. We are and we will be working with developed and developing nations to expand engineering education and application activities as we are doing in South Africa, Zambia, Uganda, Malaysia, Argentina, Peru, Brazil, Uruguay, Russia, the United States, and China. We invite participants in this summit, as national leaders, to accept our offer for collaboration and dialogue. Our leadership welcomes opportunities to work together and assist, and our volunteers stand ready to support existing projects and implement new ones in the field.

In summary, IEEE is an enthusiastic supporter of GEO and GEOSS, we look forward to close and productive cooperation, and as we have always been, we are, Madam Chair, at your disposal. Thank you.

Moshe Kam, IEEE President and CEO, 2011