

Honourable Ministers,

The Declaration to be adopted by this Ministerial Summit reaffirms that users from developed **and developing** countries should remain the driving force of GEO to respond to growing global needs.

EUMETSAT, the European organization for the exploitation of meteorological satellites representing 30 European Member States and Cooperating States through their National Meteorological Services will focus its address on the involvement of developing countries in GEO, particularly with regard to:

- The facilitation of Earth Observation data access;
- The support to Climate Change detection.

Being a user-driven organization, one of the objectives of EUMETSAT is to ensure that essential data for the monitoring of weather and for the detection of climate changes are made available in a sustained manner to the widest possible user community, not only in developed countries but also in **developing** countries. GEO will really show its value when technology is harnessed in support of

development. This is where we can together really make a difference.

EUMETSAT has put a particular focus on Africa and, since 15 years, has build partnerships with the African Union Commission and the African Regional Economic Communities. This partnership is strongly supported by the European Commission.

Through this Europe – Africa partnership, EUMETSAT has triggered the implementation of an operational network for the distribution of Earth Observation data to the whole African continent, known as the PUMA project. Building on this success, the same partners created the African Monitoring of Environment for Sustainable Development initiative (AMESD), which has just started. AMESD will not only focus on making data accessible but on making data **usable, by promoting the development of capacities in Africa**. Finally, through the Maputo Declaration signed one year ago at the EUMETSAT User Forum in Africa, African policy makers requested the European Commission to open its GMES initiative to Africa. An important meeting will take place on 7 December to set the basis of this GMES-Africa initiative.

EUMETSAT has also been instrumental in developing, together with NOAA, China and Russia, the GEONETCast concept, demonstrated in GEONETCast village located in the exhibition area.

These are practical contributions of EUMETSAT to the GEO process. However, I believe that we shall go further to ensure that GEO will evolve from concepts to actions and implementation.

Therefore, I would like to highlight two initiatives on which EUMETSAT is ready to play a key role in the GEO context in the future.

The first is related to the operational distribution of the Brazilian CB-ERS data to all African countries through the use of GEONETCast. The implementation of this service in the months to come will demonstrate the value of the cooperation between 4 continents (Africa, South-America, Asia, and Europe) to the benefit of the GEO community.

The second initiative concerns Climate Monitoring. Under WMO / EUMETSAT leadership; an initiative is going on to set up a global network of Regional Specialised Satellite Centres for Climate Monitoring. This should result in a

truly operational climate monitoring capability that will allow to monitor the evolving climate with more certainty.

In this framework, EUMETSAT would like to propose to team-up with African institutions interested to become partners of this global network. By teaming-up European and African scientific expertise in the field of climate monitoring and by putting this expertise into an operational environment coordinated by the World Meteorological Organisation, we are convinced that we will bring a significant added-value to the GEO process.

I would like to conclude my address to the Summit, by ensuring Ministers that EUMETSAT remains fully committed to the GEO process and will continue to bring a user-driven and operational perspective to this process.