

STATEMENT TO BE MADE AT THE CAPE TOWN EARTH OBSERVATION SUMMIT

His Excellency, the President of South Africa, Honourable Ministers and distinguished participants attending this Cape Town Ministerial Summit,

I, on behalf of Government of India and Chairman, Indian Space Research Organisation convey our warm greetings to each one of you. In particular, we would like to thank Government of South Africa for hosting this important summit and for its generous hospitality.

India has been a member of the GEO initiative since the First Earth Observation Summit held in Washington DC 2003. India has built over the years a strong Earth Observation programme comprising spaceborne, airborne and in-situ observation infrastructure. Currently, it has the largest constellation of remote sensing satellites comprising Resourcesat-1, Cartosat-1 and 2, IRS-1D, IRS-P4, INSAT 3A and Kalpana etc. providing observations over land, ocean and atmosphere. I must also mention, data is being received throughout the world with a network of international ground stations. India is also committed to continuity of Earth Observation missions to meet future needs. Through a unique mechanism of institutionalization, the National Natural Resources Management System, within the country, EO data is being utilized in many aspects of nine societal benefit areas identified by GEOSS. Through the Centre for Space Science, and Technology Education for the Asia-Pacific Region affiliated to the United Nations set up in India in 1996, it provides training and education to participants of several countries in Remote Sensing and GIS, Satellite Meteorology, Satellite Communication and Space science. More than 400 scientists and engineers of Asia-pacific countries have already benefited through this programme.

India is an active member in several international initiatives such as UN-OOSA, International Charter on Space and Major disasters, CEOS, Sentinel-Asia, IAF, IOCCG etc., for harnessing space technology for societal benefits.

India endorses the Cape Town Ministerial Summit Declaration and shall continue to actively participate and contribute in various activities of GEO and in strengthening establishment of GEOSS.