

**Keynote Speech at the Opening Ceremony of the Fourth  
GEO Ministerial Summit by GEO Co-Chair Cao Jianlin**

(November 13, 2015)

**Distinguished Minister of Foreign Affairs, Minister of  
Environment and Natural Resources of Mexico,**

**Distinguished Ministers of GEO member countries,  
GEO co-chairs, representatives of GEO member countries  
and participating organizations,**

**Ladies and gentlemen,**

Good morning!

It gives me great honor to attend the GEO Ministerial Summit in Mexico City as the minister of co-chair country representing the Asia-Oceania region. Please allow me to extend my warm congratulations to the Ministerial Summit on behalf of China and other GEO member countries in the Asia-Oceania region. I also wish to express my sincere thanks to the Mexican government for hosting this Ministerial Summit.

We are gathered here today to deliberate and adopt the *GEO Mexico City Declaration* and launch the *GEO Strategic Plan*

2016-2025. We are also here to witness the beginning of the second decade for GEO. I believe this Summit will be remembered as a new milestone in the history of GEO.

Ladies and gentlemen,

After 10 years of rapid expansion, GEO has developed into an inter-governmental organization dedicated to Earth observation. It now has 99 member countries and European Union, as well as 87 participating organizations and several observers. The first GEOSS implementation plan has achieved initial success - GEO has become the strongest advocate of data sharing in Earth observation and the call for data sharing has received popular support around the world; GEOSS has steadily expanded presence on the national and regional scale and laid a firm foundation for its worldwide construction; its extensive applications in nine social benefit areas have brought tangible benefits to food security, disaster reduction and prevention, ecological environmental protection and climate change. China is a contributor and beneficiary of the GEOSS implementation plan, and I believe my view is also shared by other member countries and participating organizations.

To be frank, we are going to face tougher challenges in the next

decade, such as depleting resources on the planet, deteriorating environment and frequent natural disasters. Overcoming these challenges requires GEO to undertake new historic missions. In the meantime, we agree that no country can carry out panoramic Earth observation alone and deal with all the challenges to sustainable development without outside help. GEO provides a platform for global countries to strengthen cooperation and join hands to address these challenges. It would be a natural choice of history for GEO to mobilize member countries and participating organizations to launch and implement the strategic plan for the next ten years.

Ladies and gentlemen,

At the summit we will adopt the *GEO Strategic Plan 2016-2025*, and the *Plan* lays out our common goals and missions in the next decade. The Chinese government will take active steps to implement the *Strategic Plan*, the *United Nations 2030 agenda for Sustainable Development*, and *China's National Medium-and Long-term Program for Civil Space Infrastructure*, in a steady push for the construction and development of GEOSS infrastructure in China. In the meantime, China will keep its steadfast support to GEO and

continue to make contribution to GEO development.

Finally, I sincerely hope we can strengthen cooperation to enable GEO to play a practical role in the next ten years and accelerate GEOSS construction on a national, regional and global scale, so that all member countries and participating organizations can achieve more benefits for their sustainable development.

Thank you!