

Statement of Dr. Tsehaie Woldai, Principal Delegate of the African Association of Remote Sensing of the Environment (AARSE) at the 4th Geo Ministerial Summit, Cape Town, South Africa.

GEO-chairs, Honorable Ministers and Distinguished Guests,

On behalf of its 1000 members and affiliated societies, the African Association of Remote Sensing of the Environment (AARSE), the umbrella scientific organization for EO in Africa avails itself of this opportunity to thank to the Government of the Republic of South Africa for hosting this GEO Ministerial Summit.

Since 2005, when AARSE became an Organization Member of GEO, the Association has been championing the realization of GEOSS in Africa by organizing special sessions and workshops during our biennial conferences; the next of which will take place at the end of October 2008 in Accra, Ghana. We use this opportunity to call for the support of the GEO Community for this event.

Towards the realization of GEOSS 10 year Implementation Plan in Africa, AARSE will continue to support the development of African Space Programme and policy at the regional and national level, the realization of the African Resources Management Satellite Constellation (ARMS), the African Reference Frame (AFREF), Mapping Africa for Africa (MAFA), other EO and GI initiatives. We would like to bring into the record African appreciation to the joint Brazil and China initiative of making CIBERS data freely available to Africa, which highlights the true spirit of data sharing of GEO.

The African Association of Remote Sensing of the Environment (AARSE) endorses the Cape Town Declaration and will work hard for the continuous success of GEO.

Thank You.