



# The 8<sup>th</sup> International Conference of the African Association of Remote Sensing of the Environment (AARSE)

On

*Earth Observation and Geoinformation for Africa's Development Agenda*

## THE ADDIS ABABA DECLARATION

Delegates from 40 countries present at the 8th International AARSE Conference held at the Economic Commission of Africa (ECA) in Addis Ababa from 25th to 29th October 2010;

Recognizing the role of Earth Observation (EO) in developing accurate geospatial datasets, information and knowledge to support the efforts of nations in achieving their development agendas;

Noting the importance of Earth Observation and Geospatial Science and Technology products and services in attaining the Millenium Development Goals (MDG), the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) objectives, the African Union (AU) priorities and other key national development and poverty alleviation strategies;

Recognizing the importance of Africa's participation and contribution to the implementation of the Global Earth Observation System of Systems (GEOSS) and noting an increase in a number of African countries as members of the Group on Earth Observations (GEO);

Noting that Africa is making major strides in space science and technology development with several countries such as Algeria, Egypt, Morocco, Nigeria, and South Africa developing successful space programs, including acquiring their own Earth Observation satellites;

Recognizing the meetings and resolutions of the biennial Africa Space Leadership Conference (ALC) on Space Science and Technology;

Welcome the input from international scientific societies including the Geoscience and Remote Sensing Society (GRSS) and the International Society for Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing (ISPRS) that support the building of the science base in Africa;

Recognizing the progress made on the African Resource Management (ARM) Constellation by the current members of the constellation;

Recognizing the need to establish an African space coordinating mechanism to ensure that Africa's interests are represented in international space programs collaboration and partnerships; and to develop a coherent policy and strategy for utilizing space technology for development;

Recognizing the work of AARSE and the Environmental Information System–Africa (EIS-Africa) over the past 18 years as major points of contact and facilitators of Earth Observation and Geospatial Information (GI) activities in Africa;

Recognizing the role and contribution of the African Union and the United Nations (UN) Agencies such as the UN Economic Commission for Africa and building on previous declarations and multilateral coordination initiatives in space science and technology for sustainable development in Africa such as the UNESCO/AARSE/AU High-Level Scientific Workshop in 2007;



Hereby declare and call on African Governments and the African Union:

1. To ensure that the benefits of space science and technology in regional initiatives are realised, there is an urgent need for a coordination office on space affairs at the level of the African Union Commission (AUC) that consist of representatives of all space agencies, regional organizations such as AARSE and EIS-Africa, and other African Stakeholders.
2. To support the space coordination office to represent Africa's space science and technology capability in relation to existing and future international programs and partnerships, and to develop the African space policy and programmes for the eventual establishment of an African Space Agency.
3. To engage actively at all levels of GEO activities and promote GEOSS Data Sharing Principles as outlined in the Data Sharing Action Plan and to recognize the launch of, and contribute to the operational GEOSS Common Infrastructure (GCI) with its dedicated GEO Web Portal and Clearinghouse.
4. To strengthen and harmonize human resource development and institutional capacity in the fields of EO and GI Sciences by supporting organizations such as AARSE and EIS-Africa as well as existing and new regional training programmes at tertiary institutions in partnership with UN Agencies notably UN Secretariat, UNECA, UNESCO, UNEP, UNOOSA, FAO, UNDP, UNU, etc.
5. To recognize specialized institutions in Geoinformation and Earth Observation, notably Regional Centre for Training in Aerospace Surveys (RECTAS), Regional Centre for Mapping of Resources for Development (RCMRD), the UNOOSA Regional Centres in Africa and national institutions of higher learning as the primary vehicles for capacity development in space science and technology development and applications in Africa.
6. To support the development of a dedicated African Earth Observation Satellite and the African Resource Management Constellation to serve the sustainable development needs of Africa.
7. To inspire Africa's Youth through space based education and outreach programs.

Addis Ababa, 29 October 2010

Signed :

President of AARSE

Dr. Tsehaie Woldai

Signed :

Co-Chair of the 8<sup>th</sup> Conference Committee

Mr. Sultan Mohammed