

## FOREWORD

The United Nations General Assembly decided to convene the Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE III) in its resolution 52/56 which was adopted on 10 December 1997. In this resolution the General Assembly endorsed the recommendations for the theme of the UNISPACE III Conference to be "*Space Benefits for Humanity in the Twenty-first Century*" and for the primary objectives to be:

- to promote effective means of using space technology to assist in the solution of problems of regional and global significance
- and to strengthen the capabilities of Member States, in particular developing countries, to use the applications of space research for economic, social and cultural development.

One of the earliest uses of space technology has been Remote Sensing. The first space photograph of Earth was transmitted by Explorer-6 in August of 1959 and remote sensing from space began in April 1960 with the launch of the Television and Infrared Observational Satellite (TIROS-1) as an experimental weather satellite. Many significant technologic advancements and applications of remote sensing from space have evolved for the benefit of humanity in the forty years since these early launches. Thus remote sensing was provided a very prominent role in the deliberations and technical forum of the UNISPACE III Conference.

In the Technical Forum the ISPRS was pleased to partner with the National Aeronautical and Space Administration (NASA) of the USA and with the European Association of Remote Sensing Laboratories (EARSeL) to convene a Seminar and Workshop on topics relevant to the objectives of UNISPACE III, namely 'Sustainable Development' and 'Disaster Mitigation' respectively. The ISPRS complemented these two activities with a Workshop on 'Resource Mapping.' The content, with conclusions and recommendations to the UN, from these activities is summarized here. Also included are some relevant papers for which the available program time precluded their presentation during the Conference.

It was my pleasure to coordinate and present the ISPRS contributions to UNISPACE III. However, I wish to recognize the efforts of the specialists who contributed paper presentations and to all those who were responsible for the successful staging of the program for these three events; for the preparation of this special Volume of *The International Archives of Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing*; and for preparation of remote sensing recommendations for inclusion in the final report of the Conference "*The Space Millennium: Vienna Declaration on Space and Human Development*." I express our appreciation and thanks to them for their support, specifically:

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We trust this volume will be helpful to you in preserving some of the benefits of remote sensing presented to the July 1999 UNISPACE III Conference.

Lawrence W. Fritz  
ISPRS President