



SPECIAL HIGH-LEVEL SESSION

INFORMATION AND PRESENTATION OF THE WORKSHOP RESULTS TO THE PLENIPOTENTIARY AMBASSADORS AND AFRICAN PERMANENT DELEGATES AND UNESCO STAFF

1- Background of the Workshop

Upon its establishment, the African Union requested UNESCO to assist the Union to develop and implement its own Consolidated Action Plan on Sciences and Technologies. In response to that request UNESCO assisted the African Union and the NEPAD Secretariat to organise the Pan-African Technical and Ministerial Sciences and Technologies Workshop and Conference in 2004 in Pretoria. Recently in January 2007, UNESCO significantly contributed to the Special Summit of the African Heads of States on Sciences and Technologies at the Headquarters of the Union in Addis Ababa, where the Recommendations of the above meetings were endorsed by the Heads of African States. The forthcoming proposed Workshop is a concrete follow up by UNESCO to assist the Union to define its own Strategy related to the Applications of the Satellite Remote Sensing for sustainable Development of Africa.

2- The Objectives of the Workshop:

The Workshop is conceived to be a brainstorming that will be led by African Experts based in the continent and from the Diaspora to reflect on the Issues, the Challenges, the Priorities and the affordable and implementable solutions that will support ongoing efforts in the continent to integrate space sciences and technologies in general and more specifically the applications of the huge volume of satellite remotely sensed information and data in the development process in the continent. This is an expert Group workshop. We are not expecting extensive papers presentation. Again, the workshop will a focussed technical workshop to come up with an affordable and implementable strategy for African Union that will help the continent to talk and raise it voice in international fora with a single voice representing the interests and priorities of Africa. Some of the questions that the Workshop will address include:

- (i) What can Satellite Remote Sensing Applications contribute to in the development process in Africa?
- (ii) What are the ongoing efforts at global level in general and in Africa in particular?
- (iii) What are the types of programmes and activities in this field in Africa?
- (iv) How should Africa tackle the issues related to the Applications of Satellite Remote Sensing for its own development on a sustainable basis?
- (v) What are the possibilities for Africa and what are the obstacles?
- (vi) What are the potential funding sources for Africa to implement its own strategy including the priorities in this field?
- (vii) How to organise a regional and global lobbying coalition to support the implementation of the Africa's Strategy in this field?
- (viii) What should be and what is the next step after the Workshop?

3- Expect Outputs:

The main expected output will be:

A draft of Strategy for African Union on the Applications of Satellite Remote Sensing for Sustainable Development in Africa including the following:

- (i) Short-term Plan
- (i) Mid-term Plan
- (iii) Long-term Plan
- (iv) Mechanisms for implementation these plans (funding mechanism, governing or catalysing body or networking).

4- Background and working documentation includes the following:

- The African Union Consolidated Action Plan on Sciences and Technologies
- The African Union Resolutions from the Heads of States Summit on Sciences and Technologies held in late January 2007 in Addis Ababa
- The Report and Recommendations of the First African Leadership Conference on Space Science and Technology for Sustainable Development, 23-25 November 2005, Abuja, Nigeria
- The AARSE Conference Reports and Recommendations
- The GOOS-AFRICA documents
- The Plan of Implementation of Johannesburg WSSD
- The CEOS Capacity Building Recommendations on Africa
- The GEO documentation
- Various national and regional remote sensing activities reports.