

**Second African Leadership Conference
on
Space Science and Technology for Sustainable Development**

“Building African partnerships in space”

Pretoria, South Africa, 2 – 5 October 2007

INFORMATION NOTE

Introduction

Space technology is an indispensable tool for the development of Africa. Indeed, a growing number of countries in Africa are implementing national space programmes with a strong developmental focus.

Since many of Africa’s development challenges transcend national, cultural and linguistic differences, the collective impact of these national space programmes can be greatly enhanced through collaboration.

It is against this background that the 2nd African Leadership Conference on Space Science and Technology for Sustainable Development will focus on the theme *“Building African partnerships in space.”*

This conference builds on the first African Leadership Conference on Space Science and Technology for Sustainable Development, which was held in Abuja, Nigeria, from 23rd – 25th November 2005. The conference will deliberate the role of space science and technology in Africa's present and future development with emphasis on knowledge and skills development through capacity building, knowledge sharing, joint participation in mutually beneficial projects, and bilateral and international cooperation.

Intended audience

The conference is aimed at chief executives of space-related programmes in African countries, senior government officials, diplomatic representatives and decision makers, academics, industry representatives and members of professional and civil society organisations concerned with various aspects of Africa’s development, with emphasis on the current and potential contributions of space technology towards addressing Africa’s development challenges. The conference will also provide an opportunity for space professionals to engage with experts from a variety of disciplines relating to developmental issues.

Objectives and outcomes

The conference will address the following main objectives:

- To provide a forum for exchange of ideas on the impact which space technology could have in addressing Africa's development challenges and in contributing to its development agenda;

- Identifying opportunities for cooperation in the utilisation of space technology for the development and benefit of Africa.
- Identifying common capacity-building requirements and the cooperative means to address such needs.
- To sensitise African countries to be pro-active in the implementation of UNISPACE III recommendations.
- To seeks ways to enhance Africa's participation in global space forums, such as GEO, CEOS and the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS).
- To identify a series of concrete follow-up actions and projects to be conducted during the inter-sessional periods of the Conference.

Programme

The conference shall comprise three days of presentations and working sessions, followed by one day of optional site visits to nearby space-related facilities. The programme of the Conference shall include a series of non-technical, high-level presentations aimed at policy and decision makers on the role and benefits of space technology for development in Africa. Parallel sessions shall consider a small number of topics in greater detail, *viz*:

- Practical measures that may be taken to build up the African Leadership Conference through inter-sessional activities, with emphasis on raising awareness at all levels;
- Implementation of the UN space-based platform for disaster and emergency response (SPIDER) in the various African regions;
- Cooperation in Earth observation in the framework of the African Resource Management satellite constellation project;
- Earth Observation for monitoring global climate change effects in Africa;
- Capacity development.

It is intended that specific follow-up projects should be identified for cooperative activities in the period leading up to the next conference in this series in 2009.

Sufficient time will be set aside for presentations by participants on their relevant activities and for discussions among participants to identify the priority areas of possible follow-up actions, as well as for examining possible partnerships that could be established or strengthened.

Dates and Location

The Conference will be held in Pretoria, South Africa at the CSIR Convention Centre **from 2 to 4 October 2007**. In addition, interested participants will be able to visit space-related facilities in the region on 5 October. All selected and invited participants will receive an information package with details on travel, lodging and other local arrangements.

Language of the Conference

Participants should have a good working knowledge of English, which will be the

only language of the Conference.

Participation Costs

- No conference registration fees will be charged. The direct costs of hosting the conference will be borne by South Africa.
- Air travel costs, visa costs, accommodation and subsistence costs are for the participants.
- Participants will be responsible for making their own accommodation arrangements. A list of recommended hotels and hotel rates will be made available to participants.

Visa Requirements

All participants must adhere to visa requirements for the Republic of South Africa, the details of which may be obtained from South African Missions in the countries of participants. The conference Secretariat will gladly assist interested participants to obtain the contact details of the relevant South African Missions.

Presentations and Proceedings

Invited presentations will be allotted 30 min (including questions). Contributed presentations will be allotted 20 minutes (including questions). Presentations will be made available on the Conference website. Proceedings of the Conference will be published. Selected and invited participants will receive detailed instructions for the preparation of their papers for publication.

Participants will be encouraged to contribute actively to the preparation of the conclusions and recommendations of the Conference, which will be distributed widely and will also be published in the Proceedings. Selected applicants may also be asked to act as session rapporteurs or chairpersons.

Deadline for Applications

No later than 21 September 2007

A copy of the completed application form should be directly submitted to:

M Kumalo
Secretariat ALC2007
SAAO
PO Box 9
Observatory 7935
South Africa

Fax: +27 21 460 9357
Email: secretariat@space.gov.za

Conference website

A special website has been established for the conference at www.space.gov.za/ALC2007