

LAUNCH OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN NATIONAL SPACE AGENCY

Johannesburg, 9 December 2010

STATEMENT BY BRAZIL'S NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR SPACE RESEARCH (INPE)

Dear Minister of Science and Technology, Ms. Naledi Pandor,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Government of Brazil and our National Institute for Space Research (INPE) salute the people of South Africa on the launch of the South African National Space Agency. By creating SANSA, the Government of South Africa has unified a series of important initiatives, building on impressive results in Space Science, Earth Observation and Space Engineering. South Africa is also very active in international cooperation in space, notably in forums such as GEO (Group on Earth Observations) and CEOS (Committee on Earth Observation Satellites).

Brazil is honoured to work with South Africa in building a strong space partnership of the world's emerging nations. South Africa has been an able and dedicated leader in GEO (the Group on Earth Observations) and we in Brazil have gained much benefit from your guidance. South Africa launched the "Data Democracy" initiative during its Chairmanship of CEOS (the Committee on Earth Observation Satellites) in 2008. Data Democracy is a powerful idea, which means empowering the world's developing countries to make the fullest use of Earth Observation data.

Brazil considers the Data Democracy initiative contributes to global sustainable development, and we are here today to reaffirm this important idea.

At the 2007 GEO Summit in Cape Town, Brazil and China launched the CBERS for Africa initiative to share images from the China-Brazil Earth Resources Satellites (CBERS) for all Africa. Today, INPE and the Centre for Resource Satellite Data and Applications (CRESDA) of China just signed an agreement with the South African National Space Agency (SANSA) for receiving data from the CBERS-3 satellite in South Africa. The CBERS-3

satellite is a modern platform that has four advanced imaging cameras that will allow unprecedented coverage of South Africa and neighbouring countries.

CRESDA and INPE will grant SANSA free access to all four cameras onboard CBERS 3 with the images being directly received by the Hartebeesthoek ground station. SANSA will share these images with Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Mozambique, Swaziland, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe and its national users. Similar agreements will be signed by INPE and CRESDA with other two ground stations: Maspalomas, in Canary Islands, managed by Spain; Aswan, managed by Egypt.

Brazil has taken other actions associated with the Data Democracy initiative. We have adopted an open and free data policy for all of our Earth observation satellites. We develop open source software for remote sensing image processing and geographical information systems, widely used in Latin America. Our aim is to extend the use of our open source software to developing nations in Africa and Asia.

At the COP-15 climate change conference in Copenhagen 2009, Brazil signed an important agreement with FAO (the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations). By the terms of the agreement, Brazil will transfer its technology for monitoring tropical forests to other developing nations, supported by the UN-REDD program. Brazil will help other countries to build their capacity for Measurement, Reporting and Verification (MRV) of forest carbon stocks. The primary focus of the INPE-FAO agreement is the Congo Basin, and capacity building for this region will start in the first half of 2011.

Ms. Minister, Distinguished Guests,

Brazil is fully committed to the Data Democracy initiative led by South Africa. We are willing to share our data, software, expertise and technology in earth observation with other developing nations. Brazil sees South Africa as our long-term partner in supporting developing countries to make full use of space technology.

Thank you.