Welcome Address

Workshop on Convective Systems

Leonel Fernando Perondi

São José dos Campos, May 20, 2014

On behalf of INPE I would like to welcome all attendees to the Workshop on Convective Clouds associated to the ACRIDICON-CHUVA Campaign.

I would like to express my compliments to the our institutional partners in this endeavour: Department of Aerospace Science and Technology (DCTA), University of São Paulo (USP), National Institute for Research of the Amazon Region (INPA), Max Planck Institute, University of Leipzig and DLR.

Through the name of Dr. Luiz Machado from our Institute I would like to compliment all members of the Organizing and Scientific Committees.

I would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate the Center for Weather Forecasting and Climate Studies, the area of INPE to which this initiative is affiliated.

Let me take this opportunity to very briefly introduce some of INPE´s activities bearing on this event.

Established in 1961, INPE's mission may be briefly stated as follows: "to be the national reference in Space Science, Space Technology and their applications, while providing direct returns to society in terms of products and services, industrial policy and diffusion of knowledge".

The Institute develops activities in five main areas: Space Science (Astrophysics, Aeronomy and Geophysics), Space Technology, Meteorology, Earth Observation and Climate Change.

With around 1000 staff, among researchers, technologists and technicians, the Institute attempts to implement the complete cycle of innovation, developing activities which go from basic and applied research projects, through product and service development, up to making available to society services and products that impact social and economic life.

In the space technology area, through different levels of cooperation, INPE has designed, manufactured, integrated and operated in orbit five satellite systems, comprising two data collecting satellites and three Earth remote sensing satellites.

The data collecting satellites, SCD-1 and SCD-2, launched in 1993 and 1998, respectively, operate in an almost equatorial orbit, collecting data from around 700 hydro-meteorological platforms scattered over the Brazilian territory and making these data available, daily, for more than 80 users.

The remote sensing satellite systems have been set up in cooperation with China, in an international program started in 1988. The first China-Brazil Earth Resource Satellite, CBERS-1, began operation in 1999. It was followed by CBERS-2, in 2003, and CBERS-2B, in 2007.

The satellites CBERS-3 was lost in a launch mishap at the end of last year. According to the current schedule baseline, CBERS-4 shall be launched by December this year.

Preventing, controlling and assessing the deforestation in the Amazon Region have long been important targets for the Brazilian Government.

Through a pioneering system developed by INPE, referred to as PRODES, annual changes in the Amazon forest coverage have been computed and taken as a measure of the yearly Amazon forest deforestation rate. The annual deforestation estimates and related data produced by the PRODES system constitute an important instrument for the definition of long term policies for the Amazon region.

More recently, from 2004 onwards, an almost real time system, named DETER, produces daily alerts which support field action against illegal logging in the Amazon region.

More specifically related to this meeting, INPE runs the Center for Weather Forecasting and Climate Studies – CPTEC, which is recognized by WMO as a center of excellence in education and is the Brazilian national reference for numerical weather forecasting.

As seen from the brief descriptions of activities given above, the participation of INPE in projects like the GOAamzon and Chuva, which promotes the understanding of meteorological phenomena in the Brazilian continental region, through a very broad national and international cooperation, is well aligned with INPE´s mission.

Finalizing these introductory words, I would like to express to all attendees my wishes of a very much profitable event. I am very much confident that the present meeting, besides fulfilling its specific objectives, will contribute for the dissemination of state-of-the-art knowledge among our scientists and researchers.

I wish you all a nice stay at our premises and an enjoyable time in São José dos Campos.

I would like to express our recognition and thanks to the sponsors of the GOAmazon initiative, FAPESP, FAPEAM, DLR (Germany) and DOE (USA).

Thank you.