

English Version

In the name of God, the Compassionate and the Merciful

**Remarks of HE, Dr. Motamedi
Minister of the Communications and Information Technology
In the opening ceremony of the
United Nations/Islamic Republic of Iran Regional Workshop on the Use of Space
Technology for Environmental Security, Disaster Rehabilitation and Sustainable
Development
8-12 May 2004, Tehran**

Distinguished Scholars, Specialists, and Managers,
Ladies and gentlemen,

At the outset, I would like to welcome the distinguished managers, specialists and experts of the guest countries attending this International Workshop and I hope that you have a pleasant stay in Iran. No doubt this workshop relating to the space technology application on environmental protection, disaster rehabilitation and sustainable development will provide the opportunity to focus on space technology applications and peaceful use of space through the application of the international experience, scientific and technical exchange of views as well as strengthening the basics and increase of knowledge, and to enable you to take part in increasing the level of the scientific and regional cooperation using the relevant achievements and results. As you are aware, man has been facing with different challenges in the early years of the third millennium among of which the challenge related to the sustainable development is of great importance.

Actually, the efforts of contemporary human societies to reach the higher levels of welfare in the life accompanying the wide exploitation of the natural resources and vital environmental impacts that sometime leads to the natural disasters have put a new and important duty on the shoulders of the policy and decision makers that lead and manage their communities in the context of the governments. They need more and more to use the scientific achievements based on the application of new technology, for making the optimal economic, social, cultural and environmental policies taking into account their balance, to reach the goals of sustainable development.

Fortunately in the nearly thirty recent years, the development in the application of the space technology and the use of the earth resource satellites, everyone of which with both the general and specific goals collect variety of data with different spatial resolutions from the environment and phenomena on earth surface using the divers and different sensors, have paved the way for the experts and specialists to take basic and new steps forward.

The large amount of the new knowledge that is gained through the data exploitation in different ways, has augmented the previous knowledge and the role of these findings in reaching to the comprehensive and synoptic viewpoints, have changed these technologies

to a very strong and extraordinary tools ignoring which makes the natural resources and environmental studies impossible.

On the other hand, natural disasters and the losses and casualties caused by their incidence accompanying with the need for effective reconstruction, are amongst the issues that requires rapid decision-making and basically this should be relied on the exploitation of the precise and synoptic updated data.

The currently available satellite data has these characteristics, and can play a very good role in this relation in integration with other types of data especially the one that is collected through the field tools and observations and establishment of a database in conjunction with the application of a geographic information system.

Although the natural disasters are not predictable very often, they could be mitigated and controllable. In addition, the disaster rehabilitation plays a great role in saving life. In the past years, we have been witnessing many natural disasters throughout the world that one of the very latest ones is the incidence of the earthquake in our land in the city of Bam. The disasters such as the earthquakes, draughts, destruction of the marshlands, and misuse of the lands and the removal of the vegetation cover and the incidence of the harsh floods have made many losses with the social, cultural, economic, and environmental impacts with the intense need for reconstruction. These events that will certainly occur in the future too, has led us that by conceiving the importance of the issue, decide to allocate the needed financial sources and strengthening the scientific capabilities of the human power, to use effectively and increasingly all of the available tools especially space technologies to make convenient decisions, rapid action and well management of the crisis. In this direction, if we wish to take into account the future generation then we naturally should comply the principals of the sustainable development.

For reaching this goal, as mentioned earlier, the management and specialized manpower is needed. This manpower itself should not only to play a role in the exploitation of the existing technologies but also should be capable of exchanging the information in the international level to be able to update his/her information from the scientific advancements. In this context, all of us should cooperate and make effort to serve the human society.

Nowadays, in the Islamic republic of Iran an extensive effort is being carried out in the peaceful exploitation of space. Based on the law approved by the Parliament of the Islamic Republic of Iran in last December, the Space Supreme Council is being established in the highest level with the membership of the relevant ministers and leadership of the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran to policy making in the application of space technologies, required coordination in manufacturing, launch and use of the national research satellites, approval of the long and medium term plans, leadership and sponsorship of the private sector and also contribution to regional and international cooperation. The Iran Space Agency has been established based on this law to implement the approvals of the Council and integration of the activates and develop and present programs in the context of an independent legal and financial character. The President of the Iran Space Agency is the member and secretary of the Space Supreme Council and also the Deputy Minister of Communications and Information Technology. We recognize this as a fundamental step towards integration of the space related activities in the country and active contribution to the global society and knowledge-based development.

In this connection, we hope for the rapid results for Zohreh National Satellite Project while we are presently in negotiation stage for manufacturing and launch of this satellite. Implementation of this project will lead to the development of the country's communication capacities in sound, image and data transmission for the domestic needs and international communications, and also new capabilities in the information technology segment. Of course we presently use international satellites to fulfill the needs of the country and will continue to do so if and as necessary. The Mesbah Satellite Project that will be launched to the space in the near future, is a scientific and research satellite for acquainting the experts and specialists in the research and academic centers of Iran. By manufacturing and launching of this satellite the technical knowledge of design, manufacture and equipping of the space laboratories in the country will be followed. Furthermore, the Iran Space Agency is in the process of negotiation for designing, manufacturing and launch of a small multi mission satellite in the framework of regional cooperation, in which the space experts of the country will take over the important responsibilities in designing and manufacturing of the major systems. The main mission of this satellite will be remote sensing. The satellite equipped with the sensors operating in different wavelength will collect large amount of data about the land surface phenomena that will assist for the monitoring of the environment, natural resources and the natural disasters rehabilitation. It is worth to mention that presently the satellite imagery is widely used for remote sensing of the country. We hope to be able to contribute our share effectively in the international effort for sustainable development, environmental protection and disaster rehabilitation. No doubt the international cooperation will play an important role in the advancement of the peaceful uses of outer space and I am confident that this workshop aiming for the exchange of views in the exploitation of the achievements of the aerospace science and technology will make a great contribution to the international cooperation and sharing. Expressing my gratitude to the United Nations and the Iran Space Agency that jointly organized this workshop, I wish success for all of the participants and hope again that our distinguished guests will have good memories from their stay in Iran. Ladies and Gentlemen, I now declare this workshop open.

Thank You