Statement of IEEE to the GEO Ministerial Meeting, 13 November 2015, Mexico City, Mexico

Statement by Roberto Boisson de Marca
Past President of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers - IEEE

Mr. Chairman, Ministers, and Distinguished Delegates:
We in the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers, IEEE, would like to express our appreciation to the government of Mexico and the organizers of this week's meetings, and recognize and congratulate all those organizations and individuals who have contributed to the success of GEO over the past decade.

Most of you will know IEEE as the largest and most global of the science and engineering professional societies. Today I would like to highlight the IEEE motto and our ultimate mission of "Advancing Technology for Humanity," because it so clearly expresses the alignment of GEO and IEEE.

We know that 20% or more of the earth's population has not yet benefited from technologies that became available to some countries a century or more ago. We in IEEE are committed to supporting engineering communities in developing countries as they work to improve quality of life, enhance public safety, and increase prosperity without degrading the Earth's life support system on which we all depend. It will be through partnerships across sectors that we can have the greatest impact and we particularly encourage greater engagement with the private sector, which, among other things, has been a leading innovator in information technology.

We agree with the ministerial guidance provided at the last Ministerial Summit that GEO should expand from observations to creation of a knowledge base that best supports informed decision-making. This requires that GEO is open and facilitates comprehensive user feedback and reacts to emerging societal issues. We should also understand the impacts of technology on decisions. We need to observe those portions of our planet that are not well understood from our oceans to remote land areas. We are partners with GEO in co-leading these efforts.

We must further global knowledge with open data and open information. As a large publisher, we in IEEE commit to greater access to technical literature and data, to what is commonly being described as "open access" and "open data."

In the engineering community, our perspective is that success generally depends on both the completeness and the quality of the available data. I respectfully suggest to you that, as more data is accumulated and becomes available, it will become increasingly important to devote more effort, more time, and more resources to understanding data quality.

Thank you.