Distinguished Delegates, Representatives, Advisors, Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

During the past four years, I worked closely with ISPRS Council members, Technical Commission Presidents (TCPs) and all the other ISPRS officers, to serve our society. Efforts have been devoted to enhance ISPRS’s scientific leadership, to improve services for our members, and to strengthen multi-disciplinary collaboration with other organizations. Now I am very pleased to present a summary report here.

1. Enhancing ISPRS Scientific Leadership

As a leading international society in the field of photogrammetry, remote sensing and spatial information sciences (P&RS&SIS), ISPRS is entering a new phase with more opportunities, big challenges and strong competitions. Following the ISPRS strategic plan adopted in 2010, several actions have been taken to increase the visibility and the impact of our discipline and of our society, such as the preparation of an overarching scientific vision paper and a declaration for Prague Congress, as well as the improvement of our scientific publications.

Publication of an ISPRS Scientific Vision Paper

ISPRS has a long tradition in developing and presenting scientific vision to its members and communities, such as the formulation of Congress resolutions and Technical Commission’s TORs. In December 2012, Council decided to prepare an overarching scientific vision paper through close collaboration with TCPs, ISAC and IPAC. It was completed in the middle of 2015 and has been published as an original article with a title ‘Information from imagery: ISPRS scientific vision and research agenda’ in the ISPRS Journal of Photogrametry & Remote Sensing (May 2016, 115(3–21), doi:10.1016/j.isprsjprs.2015.09.008).

This final 19-page vision paper examines the significant challenges currently facing ISPRS and its communities, reviews the state-of-the-art in ISPRS related research, development and trends, and identifies the research topics for future work. At the same time, a special issue ‘The state-of-the-art of Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing’ with 10 review/overview papers has been prepared and published in the ISPRS Journal of Photogrammetry & Remote Sensing (Volume 115, May 2016). We hope that this scientific vision paper and the special issue will encourage more innovative research and development activities in this field, and also support the preparation of 2016 Congress Resolutions, TORs of Technical Commissions, and the formation of new working groups.

Preparation of Prague Declaration

Deriving scientific evidence from imagery in support of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) and ICSU’s Future Earth initiatives is a hot topic and has been discussed largely by international communities. Clearly, this requires not only technological innovations, but also a closer multi-disciplinary and cross-board collaboration within the P&RS&SIS community and with other communities. To address this challenge, ISPRS council proposed to support Future Earth with global
geo-information as a response or a voice from the P&RS&SIS community. The issues related to its concept, implementation and collaboration were discussed in an ISPRS workshop held in Beijing, June 9-10,2015 [ISPRS e-Bulletin, Issue No 3 – 2015].

On the basis of this workshop, an ISPRS declaration was drafted by Council and ISAC, and sent to JBGIS for comments. This declaration emphasizes the ISPRS commitment to realize the full potential of information from imagery through research and development, scientific networking, international co-operation, inter-disciplinary integration, education and training. It calls on international communities to work together towards providing reliable geospatial information to support societal transformations for global sustainability. In particular, this declaration proposes advancement of a global geospatial information framework to be formed through collaboration between ISPRS and international communities. This draft declaration will be presented to this ISPRS General Assembly in Prague for comments and approval.

Improvement of Scientific Publications

Maintaining and improving the quality of scientific publications (Journals, Book Series, Annals and Archives) is one of the strategic tasks for ISPRS Council. Firstly, the collaboration with the chief-editors of the two journals (ISPRS J. P&RS and ISPRS J. GIS) was enhanced during the last four years, especially on the preparation of the Strategic Plan for ISPRS Publications and the organization of special issues. The SCI impact factor of ISPRS J. P&RS has increased to 3.1 in 2015. ISPRS J. GIS has also been included in SCI index. Secondly, a transformation from edited books to authored books for the ISPRS Book Series was proposed and approved by Council, as the original function has been replaced by the newly created ISPRS Annals. As a result, the first authored book, “Spatial Context” authored by Prof. Chris Gold, has been published and will be presented to the Prague Congress. Thirdly, ISPRS Annals and Archives have both been included in the Web of Science which may encourage more submissions.

2. Improving Services to Members and the Community

ISPRS has a very good reputation in its services to members and the community, but is also facing some challenges nowadays. While maintaining those good traditions, a number of efforts have been devoted to improve the existing service or create new services.

The Re-structuring of Technical Commissions

ISPRS have eight Technical Commissions (TCs) responsible for the scientific and technologic activities of the society through their nominated Working Groups (WGs). Some ISPRS scientists and officers identified various problems of the current TC structure, such as publications between some TCs with a substantial amount of duplicated activities, minimal participation in some TC’s symposium, and difficulty to motivate more ordinary members for bidding for the TCs. The possibility of the re-structuring had been explored by Council since 2013 and ISPRS members were invited to contribute their ideas and opinions throughout 2014, especially at all the eight TC Symposia and with ISAC and IPAC. A new TC structure was proposed by the ISPRS Council and accepted by ISPRS Ordinary Members with an overwhelming majority through a postal ballot in early 2015. The new TC structure has five new TCs: Commission I- Sensor Systems, Commission II- Photogrammetry, Commission III- Remote Sensing, Commission IV- Spatial Information Science, Commission V- Education and Outreach. The TOR of the five new TCs are also formulated and will be presented to the General Assembly for discussion in Prague.

The New ISPRS Conference Structure

The former ISPRS conference structure during a four year period consists of a quadrennial congress (Year 1), mid-term symposia (Year 3), and a number of workshops and conferences in all the four years (Year 1 to Year 4). Council received some critic from ISPRS members, such as too many smaller conferences/workshops and no visible ISPRS annual conference in the odd years (Year 2 and Year 4). It was proposed to organize an ISPRS Geospatial Week (GSW) biennially in odd years with a bundle of different workshops held at the same time and at the same place. The first GSW was organized in 2013 by Filiz Sunar in Antalya, Turkey. The second one was held in 2015 by Nicolas Paparoditis in Montpellier, France. Both meetings attracted a large number of participants and
provided high level scientific contributions. It seems that these GSWs have increased the possibility of communication between the different workshop communities and increased the visibility of ISPRS through a large event in odd years. This has led to a new ISPRS conference structure with an annual cycle of ISPRS events, i.e., Congress, GSW, Symposia, GSW, and Congress. The third GSW will be held in Wuhan, China from Sept. 18 to 22 in 2017.

**Membership Development and Services**

After lengthy discussions and the approval of Ordinary members by a postal ballot, the ISPRS Individual membership was implemented at the beginning of 2014. The establishment of Corporate Sustaining Members and an International Industrial Advisory Committee were also proposed to encourage more geospatial companies and industrial players joining ISPRS.

National Mapping and Cadastre Agencies (NMCA) are significant players in the field of P&RS&SIS and many of them are ISPRS Ordinary members. In order to highlight their important role and increase their visibility, the First ISPRS and UN-GGIM National Mapping Forum during Prague Congress was proposed. It will be organized in conjunction with a Space Agency Forum. This will provide NMCA a good platform to discuss scientific and technical issues in cadastral and topographic mapping with international colleagues, to share their experience in operational mapping and services, and to explore further collaborations with space agencies.

**Scientific Initiative**

During the autumn of 2013, ISPRS launched a call for participation in the Scientific Initiatives (SIs) with a 2014 budget of CHF 40,000 Swiss Francs. In order to benefit all ISPRS members, Working Group officers were invited to submit project ideas to support scientific and other initiatives with the aim to further improve the international status of ISPRS in the field of the photogrammetry, remote sensing and spatial information sciences. Eleven teams of researchers across six of the eight TCs submitted cases for support. Comment was sought from the relevant TCPs, and a sub-committee of three Council members was convened to independently review the proposals on the basis of scientific excellence. During the meeting in Antalya, six projects were selected and were funded at a maximum of CHF 10,000, per year. See www.isprs.org/news/announcements/131117-ISPRS-Scientific_Initiative-summaries.pdf

In October 2014, a new call for ISPRS SIs was issued and 11 researcher teams across all the eight ISPRS TCs submitted applications. An ad-hoc committee with three members reviewed these applications and seven projects were funded to a total of CHF 33,000 Swiss Francs. Recently, ISAC gave a positive review of the results of these tendencies and suggested to continue the SIs with a few valuable recommendations. On the basis of the results, it is planned to continue issuing calls for the SIs in odd years, subject to availability of resources.

3. **Strengthening Collaboration with other Organizations**

During the last four years, we have strengthened the collaboration with other international and regional organizations through inter-disciplinary research, joint workshops and other activities of common interest. This responsibility was shared by council members and other ISPRS officers. Here, I mention GEO and UN-GGIM as examples. The collaboration with other organizations will be reported by the Secretary General and other council members.

**Collaboration with GEO**

As a participating organization, ISPRS has been collaborating with GEO on global land cover mapping and service which is a common interest. Three workshops and two side events at GEO plenaries were organized (Geneva, January 14, 2013; Beijing, April 24-26, 2013; Shanghai, June 6-7, 2015; Beijing, June 9-10, 2015; Mexico City, Nov.9, 2015). A theme issue on Global Land Cover Mapping and Monitoring was published in the 2015 May issue of ISPRS J. P&RS (www.sciencedirect.com/science/journal/09242716/103). A research initiative on Collaborative Global Land Information Platform was proposed and will be included as a GEO Initiative of 2017-2019.
Collaboration with UN-GGIM

As the representative of ISPRS to UN-GGIM, I attended the 3rd and 5th session of the UN-GGIM (Cambridge, July 24-26, 2013; New York, August 5-7, 2015) and the 3rd and 4th UN-GGIM High-level Forum (Beijing, Oct. 22-24, 2014; Addis Abeba, April 20-22, 2016). With UN-GGIM, two training workshops on GlobeLand30 and its applications were organized jointly for developing countries (Beijing, June 29-July 2, 2015; Addis Abeba, April 18-19, 2016). The next joint event is the National Mapping Forum to be held from July 14 to 15 during the Prague Congress.

A UN-GGIM&ISPRS project “Global Status Of Mapping” has been conducted by Gottfried Konecny and supported by Hannover University. The project started at the end of 2012 and was completed mid 2015. A questionnaire was sent out by the UN-GGIM Secretariat to the UN Member States requesting information on the current state of authoritative topographic mapping data at the scale ranges of 1:25 000, 1:50 000, 1:100 000 and 1:250 000 and the age of these datasets. Altogether, 115 from 193 UN member countries have answered the questionnaire. An assessment of the global coverage and the age of the data was completed and printed in a 64 page publication, which is available on the websites of UN-GGIM and ISPRS.

4. Administration and Operational Matters

Organizing ISPRS Business Meetings

With the strong support from the Secretary General and ISPRS Headquarters, more than ten council meetings/joint meetings and 6 tele-meetings were organized. Minutes of these formal meetings have been published on the ISPRS website. Details of the Council and Joint Meetings will be reported by the SG.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Council Meeting</th>
<th>Joint Meeting</th>
<th>Tele-Meeting</th>
<th>Venue (Conference combined)</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Sept. 2, 2012</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td>Melbourne, Australia (ISPRS XXII Congress)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>3</td>
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<td>Chengdu, China</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td></td>
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<td>5</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Nov. 10-14, 2013</td>
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<td>Antalya, Turkey (ICSU GeoUnions Meeting)</td>
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<td>Feb. 12, 2014</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>April 15-17, 2014</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Novosibirsk, Russia (Interexpo Geosiberia 2014)</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Dec. 8-11, 2014</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Hyderabad, India (ISPRS TC VIII Symposium)</td>
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<td>11</td>
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<td>12</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>July 7-10, 2015</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<td>Prague, Czech Republic</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Jan. 7-9, 2016</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Beijing, China</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Feb. 17, 2016</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>Munich, Germany</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>March 15-18, 2016</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td>Dubai, UAE</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
During the four year period, the eight TCPs have done excellent jobs organizing the scientific activities of ISPRS, including symposia, conferences, special issues and benchmarking etc. Most working groups have organized at least one meeting.

**Representing ISPRS at other Conferences**

During the past four years, I have represented ISPRS at more than 40 conferences or meetings organized by ISPRS or other international organizations, as listed in Table 2. It gave me a good opportunity to learn from our members and to meet representatives from other countries/organizations.

Table 2. Other conferences attended in the name of ISPRS (selection)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Conferences</th>
<th>Venue</th>
<th>Role</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nov. 22-23, 2012</td>
<td>GEO-IX Plenary Session</td>
<td>Foz de Iguacu, Brazil</td>
<td>ISPRS Statement and Presentation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov. 26-30, 2012</td>
<td>ACRS 2012</td>
<td>Pattaya, Thailand</td>
<td>Keynote Presentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 24-28, 2013</td>
<td>ASPRS Conference 2013</td>
<td>Baltimore, USA</td>
<td>Greetings at the Opening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 21-26, 2013</td>
<td>ISRSE Meeting</td>
<td>Beijing, China</td>
<td>Greetings at the Opening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 14, 2013</td>
<td>Annual Conference of French Society</td>
<td>Paris, France</td>
<td>Greetings at the Opening and Keynote Presentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 24-26, 2013</td>
<td>UN-GGIM Forum (Cambridge conference)</td>
<td>Cambridge, UK</td>
<td>Presentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept. 2-6, 2013</td>
<td>CIPA Conference</td>
<td>Straßbourg, France</td>
<td>Welcome Speech and Presentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept. 9-13, 2013</td>
<td>54th Photogrammetric Week</td>
<td>Stuttgart, Germany</td>
<td>Welcome Speech</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept. 20-22, 2013</td>
<td>23rd UN/IAF Workshop on Space Technology for Economic Development</td>
<td>Beijing, China</td>
<td>Presentations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov. 11-17, 2013</td>
<td>ISPRS GeoSpatial Week</td>
<td>Antalya, Turkey</td>
<td>Welcome Speech and Plenary Presentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov. 6-7, 2013</td>
<td>Symposium on Satellite Mapping Technology and Application</td>
<td>Nanjing, China</td>
<td>Welcome Speech and Plenary Presentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec.5-6, 2013</td>
<td>ISPRS/ IGU/ICA Workshop on Borderlands Modelling and Understanding</td>
<td>Beijing, China</td>
<td>Welcome Speech and Plenary Presentation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan. 16-18, 2014</td>
<td>GEO-X Plenary Session and Ministerial Summit</td>
<td>Geneva, Switzerland</td>
<td>ISPRS Statement and Presentations at side events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 11-12, 2014</td>
<td>1st Union Commission on Climatic and Environmental Change (CCEC) Workshop</td>
<td>Beijing, China</td>
<td>Presentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 16, 2014</td>
<td>Interexpo GEO-Siberia</td>
<td>Novosibirsk, Russia</td>
<td>Welcome Speech and Presentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 14-16, 2014</td>
<td>ISPRS TC IV Symposium</td>
<td>Suzhou, China</td>
<td>Welcome Speech and Plenary Presentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 19-21, 2014</td>
<td>ISPRS TC VI Symposium</td>
<td>Wuhan, China</td>
<td>Welcome Speech and Keynote Presentation</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 1-3, 2014</td>
<td>AfricaGEO</td>
<td>Cape Town, South Africa</td>
<td>Keynote Presentation</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 3, 2014</td>
<td>ICSU Workshop on Future Earth</td>
<td>Beijing, China</td>
<td>Presentation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Reporting to the Society through various Media

Reporting on the activities of the society through the ISPRS e-Bulletin and other media has been shared by Council members and other ISPRS officers. Table 3 gives some of the editorials and reports that I wrote in the last four years.

#### Table 3. Reports publicized in ISPRS e-Bulletin and other Media

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Magazines</th>
<th>Issue/Date</th>
<th>Article Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ISPRS e-Bulletin</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Issue 5- Nov., 2012</td>
<td>Editorial: Stronger scientific voice and better service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Issue 1- Feb., 2015</td>
<td>Editorial: Supporting Future Earth with Global Geo-information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Issue 1- March, 2016</td>
<td>Editorial: Towards an Advanced Geospatial Computing Platform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GIM Page</td>
<td>October, 2012</td>
<td>ISPRS under new Leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>August, 2013</td>
<td>Supporting Future Earth with Global Land Cover Information</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5. Acknowledgements

The abovementioned achievements could not have been accomplished without the good team work of ISPRS officers, members and supporters. I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere thanks to them.

First of all, I would like to thank my fellow council members, Secretary General Christian Heipke, 1st Vice President Orhan Altan, 2nd Vice President Marguerite Madden, Treasurer Jon Mills, and Congress Director Lena Halounová. They have not only provided me with brilliant ideas and strong support, but also made significant contributions to the areas where they take responsibility.

Secondly, I would thank all the TCPs, Working Group officers, ISAC, IPAC and the other committees, Journal and Book series editors, Regional Representatives, Web Master, Headquarters Staff, and all other ISPRS officers. They have done excellent jobs, which supported the successful operation of the whole society.

Thirdly, I want to express my gratitude to our Ordinary Members, Honorary Members, Regional Members, Sustaining Members, Associate Members, Fellows and many others. They gave us generous support and valuable suggestions. Some of them have hosted ISPRS conferences, meetings, and / or provided support to other ISPRS related activities.

Finally, I should thank my own organization (National Administration of Surveying, Mapping and Geo-Information and National Geomatics Center of China) and Chinese Society of Geodesy Photogrammetry & Cartography. They have provided me with long-term financial and personnel support for my ISPRS related activities.