

Joint IGU and ISPRS Seminar on Geo-frontier Understanding

On March 15th, 2012, a Joint Seminar on Geo-frontier Understanding was successfully organized in Beijing, by School of Geography, Beijing Normal University (BNU), and co-sponsored by International Geographical Union (IGU), International Society of Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing (ISPRS), and China Society of Geography (CSG). The major objective of this seminar was to discuss the basic issues of geo-frontier understating and promote inter-disciplinary collaboration among geography, Geomatics and international relations studies. More than 40 participants from Beijing Normal University, National Geomatics Center of China, Ministry of Civil Affairs, China Academy of Science, China Foreign Affairs University, Hong Kong Polytechnic University, and Yunnan Normal University attended the seminar.

The seminar was chaired by Prof. Chen Jun, ISPRS secretary general, and five presentations were invited. Prof. Liu Yanhua, the president of China Society of Geography and former vice minister of China Ministry of Science and Technology, gave a welcome speech and a presentation on the Role of Geography in Global Change Research. Prof. Ronald Abler, IGU president, gave a talked about the Place of geopolitics within geographical thought and its relation with global understanding. Prof. Giuliano Bellezza, vice president of the IGU, talked about the cultural interpretation and understanding of frontier region with Remote sensing. Prof. Mike Meadows, IGU secretary general, focused on the research frontiers in physical geography. Prof. Chen Jun's presentation was "From Boundary to Frontier: Modeling & Understanding," and he introduced the Digital boundary and its application in China and talked about the understanding of Geo-frontier and its outlook.



The participants and invited speakers had an in-depth and interactive discussion. Prof. Yang Shengtian, dean of school of geography of BNU, Prof. Ge Yuejing, vice dean of school of Geography and Prof. Cheng Shengkui, China Academy of Science etc. raised interesting questions related to geo-frontier understanding and geopolitics research. Participants agreed that Geo-frontier Understanding is a newly emerging, innovative concept and needs to be explored. As it fits perfectly with the IGU initiative on 'Global Understanding' and ISPRS's philosophy of 'Information from Imagery', it is expected to lead to closer collaboration between IGU and ISPRS on Geo-frontier studies. Several possible actions were proposed and discussed:

- 1) continue to co-sponsor joint seminars or workshops by IGU and ISPRS;
- 2) form a joint ISPRS/ IGU working group on Geo-frontier with co-chairs from both societies

Executive members of IGU also visited School of Geography, BNU which ranks among the top geography departments in China, and listened to introductions from the faculty. Both sides hope for more communication and cooperation in the future.