Prof. Hiroki Matsuo  
Chairman of Space Activities  
Commission of MEXT

Welcome Message  
To the participants to the 16th session of the Asia-Pacific Regional Space Agency Forum (APRSAF-16) in January

It is my great honor to serve as General Chairperson of the 16th session of the Asia-Pacific Regional Space Agency Forum (APRSAF-16) with Dr. Chaivat and announce to you that the APRSAF-16 will be held from 26 to 29 January 2010 in Bangkok, Thailand.

This Forum will jointly be organized and co-sponsored by the Ministry of Science and Technology of Thailand (MOST), the Geo-Informatics and Space Technology Development Agency (GISDA), the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology of Japan (MEXT), and Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA). The APRSAF was established in 1993 in response to the declaration adopted by the Asia-Pacific International Space Year Conference (APIC) in 1992, to enhance the development of each country’s space program and to exchange views toward future cooperation in space activities in the Asia-Pacific region. The APRSAF has held fifteen annual meetings organized jointly by the MEXT, JAXA, and co-host organizations of countries participating in the APRSAF, to discuss current space-related issues and possible cooperation among countries mainly in the region.

While the APRSAF has been an active forum to promote cooperative activities to resolve common problems at the regional level, the APRSAF-16 will be held under the main theme entitled “Space Applications: Contributions towards Human Safety and Security” with the aim to enable countries in the Asia-Pacific region to improve the quality of life of their people through enhanced use of space-based systems, activities and services.

The APRSAF-16 is going to have a plenary session, and 4 working groups (WGs): Earth Observation (EO) WG, Communication Satellite Applications (CSA) WG, Space Education and Awareness (SEA) WG and Space Environment Utilization (SEU) WG. At the plenary session, we will have a summary report of the Sentinel Asia (Disaster Management Support System in the Asia-Pacific Region), SAFE (Satellite Applications For Environment) and STAR (Satellite Technology for the Asia-Pacific Region) program. Other topics will be informed in due course.

Once again, I look forward to seeing you in Bangkok for exchanging lively views toward future cooperation in space activities, and hope that the APRSAF-16 will contribute to further cooperation in space activities in the Asia-Pacific region.