

## Welcome Address of Universidad de Concepción

We are gathered here today for the inauguration of the 4th General Meeting of the International VLBI Service for Geodesy and Astrometry, which, as expressed in the announcement, brings together representatives from all IVS components to share information, hear peer reports, and plan future activities.

This meeting is organized by the Transportable Integrated Geodetic Observatory (TIGO), which came into being as a result of an agreement signed in Frankfurt, Germany on June 21st, 2000 giving Chile—and in particular the Region of Bío Bío—the first geodetic fundamental station in the southern hemisphere, integrating us into the global network of observatories.

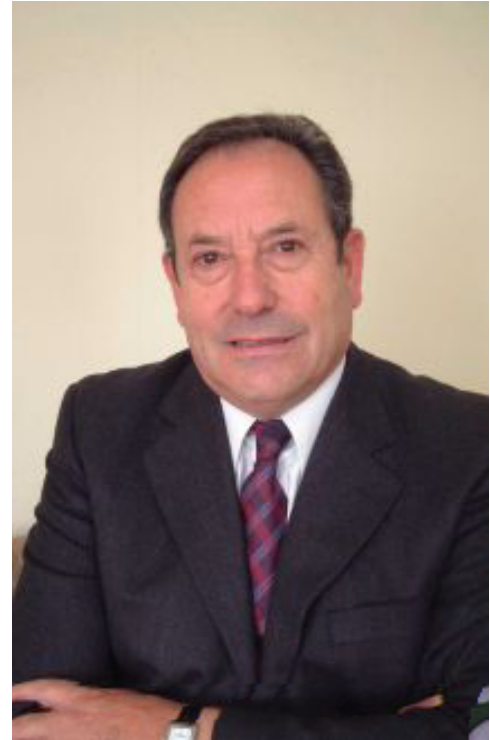
The installations of TIGO have contributed data to the Global Reference System. It has also contributed with something that is very important: an important contribution to our academic work and research. The presence of TIGO at our university has motivated academics from various faculties, examples being the academic initiatives in geodesy, astronomy, and radioastronomy, which should be completed in March 2007.

The Universidad de Concepción, which cooperates together with the Universidad del Bío Bío and the Instituto Geográfico Militar in this initiative, is proud of the results obtained with the observatory that is located on this campus where today we gladly host this meeting. Indeed, we should note that the TIGO radio telescope ranks second in the international VLBI network in terms of quantity of observations, which enhances the importance of being located in the southern hemisphere.

We know that there are challenges ahead, such as the construction of a second telescope whose objective is to be able to perform the observations that are planned in the future. The ALMA project, which is being developed in northern Chile and which will house the largest radio telescope on Earth, has generated a very positive environment favorable to fulfilling this desire, and in general to the development of the various disciplines that are favored with initiatives such as the ones we have mentioned.

We believe that the construction of a second radio telescope in Chile provides a great opportunity to our country to transfer new technologies, generate new knowledge, and—something very important—contribute particularly to the training of engineers and physicists. Our university is committed to working towards the success of this initiative, and we hope to obtain the financing required for this project at the national and/or international level.

Additionally, I would like to especially welcome the 75 experts from 17 countries who participate in this meeting, many visiting our country or South America for the first time. I know that you



Professor Sergio Lavanchy

have an intense work program in the days ahead, but I hope that you will have the opportunity to see our region and especially our university.

Finally, I would like to thank all the people who have made this meeting possible, represented by the Organizing Committee presided by Dr. Wolfgang Schlüter from Germany, and Dr. Hayo Hase, Director of TIGO.

Professor D. Sergio Lavanchy Merino  
Rector de la Universidad de Concepción