

Welcome Address from IVS Chair

Honorable Authorities,

Rector Professor Lavanchy,

Dear VLBI Friends,

Dear Colleagues,

I thank you, Rector Lavanchy for the warm welcome words. I would like to express my gratitude that the IVS General Meeting 2006 is held in Chile hosted by the University of Concepción. It is our fourth meeting. This is the first time we meet in the southern hemisphere. As the General Meeting is held every two years in the period January to March, we have been faced with real winter seasons so far. First, there was Kötzing/Wetzell, Germany, where we had snow; I remember the dinner evening. The second meeting was in Tsukuba; it was winter but not really cold. The third meeting took place in Ottawa; I remember the “Winterlude” with the ice sculptures in front of the hotel. Here in Concepción, it is summer and it is warm. Knowing the hospitality of the Chilean people, I am sure our meeting will be a very pleasant one.



Dr. Wolfgang Schlüter, IVS Chair

The Local Organizing Committee has done an outstanding job in preparing the meeting, and I would like to express my gratitude to Hayo Hase (chair of the LOC), Oscar Cifuentes and Jenny Neumann for their work, guaranteeing a pleasant stay in Concepción.

The Program Committee has set up an excellent program—of course with contributions from the participants—with oral and poster presentations. I am looking forward to interesting discussions and expect a very fruitful and successful meeting. I thank the members of the Program Committee for their work, in particular Dirk Behrend, the new Director of the Coordinating Center, who coordinated the Program Committee.

We will enjoy the hospitality of Chile, and I thank the Rector Professor Lavanchy for the provision of the meeting facilities at the University of Concepción.

TIGO, the German Transportable Integrated Geodetic Observatory, is hosted by the University of Concepción. TIGO is operated by BKG in close collaboration with a Chilean Consortium led

by the University of Concepción. The other members of the Consortium are the University Bío Bío and the Military Geographic Institute (IGM) of Chile.

Concepción was elected out of 12 proposals, made by agencies in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, India, Indonesia and the Philippines in 1998. The University of Concepción, with the idea of the consortium, could offer and guarantee to take over responsibilities for the infrastructure and for the operation. Furthermore, the space geodetic network had a gap in this area, which needed to be filled. Today TIGO plays an important role in particular in the maintenance of the global reference frames and the determination of Earth rotation parameters. It contributes to IVS as well as to IGS and ILRS since April 2002. With the GGOS project of the International Association of Geodesy, which will result in a precise reference system, consistent for decades, the contribution from TIGO will become essential.

I mention this, as for more than five years we have had a very good collaboration, and I would like to remind you that observatories cost money and the load for TIGO is fairly shared. I would like to express my gratitude—as IVS Chair but also as representative of BKG—to the University of Concepción, the University Bío Bío and the IGM for the good collaboration and for the important contributions. Personally I would like to thank the Director for Research of the University of Concepción, Jaime Baeza, for his engagement.

The General Meeting will show results in VLBI at the state-of-the-art and will place emphasis on VLBI2010. The plans for future developments are of great importance and need coordination in order to make best use of the international resources. With the recently released report on VLBI2010 and the establishment of the VLBI2010 Committee, I think we have a good basis for developing our future. VLBI2010 will be a challenge not only in the next few years but for decades to come.

I am certain that the meeting will be very successful and will stimulate our work for the next two years. I wish all attendants to enjoy the conference and splinter meetings as well as the Chilean hospitality.

Thank you.

Dr. Wolfgang Schlüter
IVS Chair