

**Welcome Address of Professor Alexander Viktorov,
the Minister of Science and Education
of Saint Petersburg Government**

Dear participants
of the 5th IVS General Meeting!
On behalf of Saint Petersburg Government and of the Saint Petersburg Governor Valentina Matvienko I am pleased to welcome you in our city. The fifth General Meeting is carried out by Institute of Applied Astronomy of Russian Academy of Sciences, one of the biggest astronomical institutes of Russia, which in this year celebrates its 20-year anniversary. IAA is the creator of “Quasar” VLBI Network, the largest Russian astronomical project of the last two to three decades. This system is used for solution of a lot of fundamental astrometrical and astrophysical problems and unites scientists from different academician and applied institutions of Russia. I am pleased that the “Quasar” system operates in close cooperation with the radio telescopes of the IVS VLBI Network.

The main goals of this meeting are to unite efforts of representatives of different institutions which are working under the umbrella of IVS, to sum up the basic scientific results of the VLBI community and to discuss new ideas and plans for the next two years. The IVS meeting is a good chance to strengthen world cooperation in astrometry, geodynamics, and space geodesy. For Russia this meeting plays an important role in the connection with the development of the technology of global navigation satellite systems and, first of all, the GLONASS system, the basic system of time-positioning and navigation service of Russia.

I would like to wish you a successful work and a pleasant stay in our remarkable city.



Thank you for your attention!