

STATEMENT BY THE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE REGIONAL  
CENTRE FOR SERVICES IN SURVEYING, MAPPING AND  
REMOTE SENSING ON THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE UNITED  
NATIONS, FOOD AND AGRICULTURAL ORGANISATION  
AFRICOVER - EAST AFRICA PROJECT FIRST NATIONAL  
COORDINATOR'S MEETING 6 - 9 DECEMBER 1997

The Guest-of-Honour, Mr Permanent Secretary,  
Office of the Vice-President & Ministry of  
Planning and National Development,  
Your Excellency the Ambassador of Italy,  
Food and Agricultural Organisation Representative,  
Africover Chief Technical Advisor,  
Distinguished Participants,  
Ladies and Gentlemen.

It gives me great pleasure to be with you at this auspicious occasion of the opening of the FAO Africover Project First National Coordinators Meeting.

I wish to congratulate the meeting organisers, namely the FAO Africover Management, for having perfected this important initiative and for selecting Nairobi as the venue. We at the Regional Centre for Services in Surveying, Mapping and Remote Sensing are pleased with the choice of this venue because our Headquarters are only next door to the Project site, thus allowing for greater cooperation due to this close proximity. Truly, the Centre is fully committed to strengthen and cement this cooperation.

The Permanent Secretary, Your Excellency the Ambassador, Distinguished Participants, Ladies and Gentlemen, it is noteworthy to appreciate the efforts of Africover Management because the objectives, the meeting seeks to achieve both in the short and long run, are crucial to the successful realisation of the development

aspirations of all our countries, most of which are members of the Centre.

The programme provides a forum for discussion on common regional issues among Project Countries and with the Project Regional Office in Nairobi, while examining the status, progress and future plans of the activities of each country.

Our Guest of Honour, Your Excellency, Distinguished Delegates at this time in our development when external aid and assistance are playing a major role in our national and regional public investments, the contribution of the Italian Government in this initiative is a great intervention for the well-being not only of the region, but of Africa as a whole in the area of land cover assessment based on remote sensing.

Our Guest of Honour, Your Excellency, Distinguished Delegates, most of our countries are now seeking to establish greater institutional capacity and we express our sincere hope that Africover will develop to its full anticipated capacity for the mutual benefit of all our countries.

May I also take this opportunity to very briefly highlight the main objectives of our Centre. The Regional Centre for Services in Surveying, Mapping and Remote Sensing aims at providing specialized services in the mapping of resources and Geographic Information Systems. In addition, the Centre aims at providing training for nationals of member states in those fields already mentioned

above.

The Centre also carries out studies and research in surveying, mapping, remote sensing and geographic information systems and make available to member states, the results of the studies and researches. A further objective is to provide advisory services to member states, upon requests on problems relating to natural resource and environmental information.

The Centre is therefore in position to strengthen even further existing cooperation with the AFRICOVER Project Unit for the mutual benefit of our two institutions.

The Guest-of-Honour, Your Excellency, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen, with this few remarks,

I thank you for your attention.