ISPRS 2008 Congress
Beijing

The twenty-first Congress of the International Society for Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing (ISPRS) approaches, bringing with it General Assembly re-election of new council and technical commission officers. There will also be keynote speeches and plenary sessions featuring distinguished scholars, parallel oral and poster sessions presenting the latest developments in a broad range of topics, and a user forum showing solutions and new user-community requirements. A commercial exhibition will accompany the congress, demonstrating state-of-the-art equipment, devices, software and high-resolution images. Technical visits, social programme, sightseeing and pre- and post-congress tours will help participants experience developments in China and offer them some insight into its long history and culture and a chance to appreciate the beautiful natural scenery.

Preparations have been going smoothly. To attract more participants announcements and flyers have been widely distributed by email, post, and at international conferences. Advertisements and articles have been published in professional newspapers and magazines. Media partners for ISPRS 2008 Beijing are GIM International, the Asian Surveying and Mapping Newsletter, GIS Development, and Coordinates. Detailed arrangements, such as meeting rooms and offices, have been determined and the online abstract and paper submission and evaluation system activated at the Congress website. Financial support from the industry has been encouraging; by the end of October 2007 seven companies had signed agreements with the Local Organising Committee. Leica Geosystems is the exclusive platinum sponsor; gold sponsors are Beijing Eastdawn Information Technology Inc, the Aerial Photogrammetry & Remote Sensing Bureau of China National Administration for Coal Geology (ARSC), Trimble, and China Siwei Surveying and Mapping Technology Corporation. ESRI and PCI are respectively named silver and bronze sponsor. Sponsorship discussions are also underway with other companies. Sogou Information Co Ltd under Sohu has signed an agreement to provide E-map service. Regarding the commercial exhibition, 111 of the 142 exhibition stands were booked before November 2007.

The Government of China is strongly supporting the Congress. Premier Zeng Peiyan is honorary chairman of the National Steering Committee (NSC) for the Congress, and co-chairing it are Mr Lu Xinshe, vice-minister of the Ministry for Land Resources and State Bureau of Surveying and Mapping, and Mr Xu Guanhua, former minister of the Ministry of Science and Technology. NSC consists of academicians of the Chinese Academy of Science and the Chinese Academy of Engineering in Photogrammetry, Remote Sensing and Spatial Information Science. There has been a very positive response from fifteen Chinese remote sensing committees and ten GIS committees belonging to national professional institutions. It is expected that Chinese professionals and organisations will actively participate in the July 2008 Congress. Please put the date in your calendar for ISPRS 2008 Beijing and visit the Congress website at www.isprs2008-beijing.org for the latest information. I look forward to meeting you in Beijing in July 2008.