

Vicomte Frimout,

Mister Director General of Belspo,

Mister Chief Strategy Officer of the City of Ghent,

Dear Guests,

It's more than a pleasure to open this conference with Dirk Frimout. I'm sincerely honoured because Dirk Frimout is not only among the few human beings to have had the privilege/the chance to observe the Earth from outer space, a dream shared by all of us. Dirk Frimout is also our first Belgian astronaut and we are very proud of his path!

But in the sky, there are many others eyes – glacial eyes- who can observe the Earth from outer space: satellites!

They give us not only the measure of the beauty and fragility of our planet; they also allow us to better understand, better monitor and better protect it!

But back in 1989, Space organisations created Eurisy to bridge/ to link/ to connect the world of Space experts with the world of non-users. So, the goal of Eurisy is to make the potential of satellite data known **and** use by civil society to better manage our environment and to create better habitats for the current and future generations.

Today, we are gathered to discuss how satellite Earth observation can be shared and used to the benefits of humankind, and in particular, to those humans, approximately 50% of them, who live in cities.

There is a great deal today about Cities! And satellites applications is one of the important tools to make: Smart environment (sustainable)/ Smart Economy (innovations & interconnections between the systems) / Smart living (health, culture, social services) / Smart Mobility (sustainable transports) & Smart People (education and new technologies).

That's all reasons why we are very grateful to the City of Ghent, to BELSPO and the “Apps For Ghent Consortium” to

have endorsed the idea of organising this conference within the Eurisy “Space4Cities” initiative.

We have 2 objectives today:

The 1st objective: is to explore the current and potential uses of satellite applications to make our cities more sustainable, more efficient, more healthy and more inclusive.

We will hear today examples of:

- How satellite imagery can be used to better manage infrastructure,
- How to sustain green energies
- How to improve air quality in cities... among others.
- We will learn about the Copernicus services, relying on European satellites.
- And, we'll hear Space experts they will explain where satellite data can be found and how it can be used.

The 2d objective - with all this testimonial- is not only to raise awareness about the potential of satellite applications but also, to generate ideas: **on how to use**

them in new innovative ways && to respond to actual needs, constraints and priorities of cities and their inhabitants.

I really invite you, to participate actively in the discussion. Either you are an expert or a newcomer in the domain of satellite applications, please don't hesitate, they are no stupid questions. And probably it could happen, we might not have an answer to all of the questions that will be raised today. But yours questions will help to generate new ideas and to better promote the transfer of space services into society.

I hope that today will bring some inspiration for you all, to make our cities ...more smart!!

I wish you an exciting conference!