

projects involving the use of remote-sensing data in Bolivia, Colombia, the Dominican Republic and Chile -- and new projects are being considered.

The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) has also participated in projects in many Latin American countries that use expertise, equipment and technology developed by the Canadian space industry. These projects use remote-sensing data, as well as data from ground instruments originally designed for satellites, to support the sustainable development of natural resources that will lead to economic recovery and the alleviation of hardship.

In January 1995, Canada will become a source of remote-sensing data for the international community with the launching of Radarsat, the first earth-observation satellite dedicated exclusively to using radar technology. This innovative technology allows the satellite to collect data throughout the day and night, as well as through cloud cover. By varying the direction of the radar beam, users will be able to select the specific sites where they require imagery. Latin America, like Canada and the United States, will be covered every seven days or less, depending on the kind of radar image selected.

One of the objectives of this important program is the involvement of the private sector. To achieve this, a consortium called Radarsat International Incorporated has been awarded exclusive international distribution rights for Radarsat data in exchange for a contribution to the Radarsat ground segment. There are also provisions for revenue sharing from the sale of Radarsat data to support the cost of operating the satellite.

In the field of telecommunications, Canada participates in regional organizations such as the Inter-American Telecommunications Commission. It has also been successfully pursuing satellite co-ordination agreements with Latin American countries. Recently, Argentina has acquired the services of the two Anik C satellites from Telesat Canada to provide services until it launches its own satellites in 1996.

The night sky continues to fascinate us all. The addition of artificial satellites tracking rapidly across the backdrop of deep space is the tangible result of this interest. The images of earth that we receive from those orbiting platforms have given us all a new perspective on our own planet. The view from space makes us more aware of how unique and fragile earth is. This perception of our planet creates a strong sense of solidarity -- not only among individuals, but also among nations.

The Canadian government looks forward to continuing its fruitful co-operation with countries of the Americas -- co-operation that has produced so much through space activities and their applications -- and wishes all participants success in this conference.