

Welcome Remarks

Good morning old friends and new friends! It is great honor for me to give the welcome remarks, thanks Françoise. Welcome to China, welcome to Beijing! After the May Day holiday, it becomes warmer and warmer. May is the best season in Beijing. Dust storms have gone, green returns.

The biggest charming of China today is its fast change. You must have noticed the “FuWa” in your document bag, mascot for the 2008 Olympic Games. The next Olympic Games are only one year away. Beijing, like many other Chinese cities, seems like a big building site at present. If you had ever been to Beijing before, you will feel its rapid changes. Tomorrow afternoon, before the banquet, there will be a bus tour specially prepared for you. We will drive around the Olympic park. You can see the under-construction National Stadium, National Aquatics Center, and many other venues. All of them will be completed in the year.

Astronomy in China is also changing fast. One year before, the largest optical telescope is 2 meters aperture; the largest radio telescope is 25 meters diameter. Last October, a 50 meters radio telescope was finished. The day before yesterday, a new 2.4 meters optical telescope got its first light. Two or three months later, a small scale LAMOST spectrum sky survey telescope will be ready. By the end of next year, the full 4 meters LAMOST telescope will be completed, which will be the

most powerful spectrum sky survey facility in the world. Maybe ten years later, the largest radio telescope dish will appear in south-west China with 500 meters aperture.

As the current China, our IVOA is also changing fast. In October 2003, several high level IVOA persons, for example Peter Quinn, Andy Lawrence, Oishi Masatoshi, Ajit Kembahavi, Keith Noddle, Catherine Qin, and Korean peoples, came to Beijing for the first IVOA small projects meeting. More than 3 years later, we gather Beijing again for our dream of Virtual Observatory. From the wiki pages you will learn, all the sessions have been filled fully. The crowded topics and talks show high spirits of us on VO. Although there are many difficulties and problems facing the VO, I am confident with the efforts of all of us, the dream, VO, will step into our daily work in the near future.

May you have a good time here, and enjoy the trip to Beijing.
Thanks.