For the third time since 2006, the ISCRAM-CHINA conference took place in Harbin, one of the ten largest cities in China and capital of China’s Northeast province of Heilongjiang, where the annual conference has found a home at the Harbin Engineering University and the School of Economics and Management.

The key target audience of the ISCRAM-CHINA conferences is the Chinese research community involved in crisis management and information systems, although the conference experiences a growing international attendance from the wider South-East Asian region and beyond. The language of the conference is English, although obviously many hallway discussions are conducted in Chinese. The conference program consists of two interactive days of keynote and participant presentations. As for the international ISCRAM Conference, the topics presented at ISCRAM-CHINA target all phases of emergencies – from early warning to recovery – and all phases of information systems – from design to implementation. Topics of particular interest for the 2008 meeting were enterprise crisis management, public security and crisis management in city development, and industrial crisis management.

Both in 2007 and 2008, the ISCRAM-CHINA conference has teamed up with other events to offer a joint program. In 2007, ISCRAM-CHINA was invited to serve as a post-conference program for IDRC, the International Disaster Reduction Conference which also was organized in Harbin that year. IDRC’s aim is to offer a platform for the wide range of the most pertinent risks posed to society as a whole, and to provide a platform for in-depth discussion among experts and decision makers of the different risk sectors, with an emphasis on risk management implementation at “the last mile”. In 2008, ISCRAM-CHINA joined forces with the GI4DM Symposium, with GI4DM an acronym for “Geographic Information for Disaster Management”. GI4DM is coordinated by the ISPRS Working Group on spatial data integration for emergency services, and previous editions of the GI4DM Symposium took place in Delft, the Netherlands (2005), Goa, India (2006) and Toronto, Canada (2007). The goal of the GI4DM Symposia is to begin a dialogue on the disaster management problems in their entirety by considering
geospatial technologies applicable for emergency management, as well as particular user requirements for spatial data and standards.

Every year, the organizers succeed in attracting keynote speakers from the wider international ISCRAM community, thus highlighting the international ambitions of the meeting. Keynote speakers at previous editions were Tung Bui (Hawaii University, USA), Paul Burghardt (DECIS Lab, the Netherlands), Guy Weets (European Commission), Eric Rasmussen (INsTEDD), Thomas Grein (World Health Organization) and Murray Jennex (San Diego State University, USA).

For ISCRAM-CHINA 2008, six keynote speakers were invited – four renowned international and two leading Chinese researchers in the domain of information systems and crisis management.

Yin Guanghui, Vice Director of National Earthquake Administration in China, and Qu Guosheng, Senior Engineer of National Earthquake Administration in China, provided for a compelling account of the Rescue efforts for the Wenchuan Earthquake in China. They are involved in the construction of CISAR (China International Search And Rescue Team) which was established in 2001. The main target for this team is to search and rescue these victims buried by collapsed buildings caused by earthquake or other emergencies. Today, CISAR is an international standard team owning over 300 advanced equipments and about 20 search dogs. Since 2003, this team has completed 3 national and 7 international rescue actions including Indian Ocean Earthquake and tsunami 2004, Pakistan Earthquake 2005, and the Yogyakarta, Indonesia Earthquake in 2006.

Latif Ladid, founder and currently president of the IPv6 Forum (www.ipv6forum.com) gave a keynote speech on the next generation internet and its implications for security. Latif is also the chairman of the European IPv6 Task Force (www.ipv6.eu) and a partner Member of the Security Task Force (www.securitytaskforce.org). Latif has been actively involved as a researcher on multiple EC funded projects (6INIT, 6WINIT, Euro6IX, Eurov6, NGNi, SEINIT, u-2010,…), and has extensive skills regarding IPv6 state-of-the-art insight and field deployment experience. The creation of the IPv6 Forum based in Luxembourg and the initiation of strategic IST research projects focused on the exploitation of IPv6 add substantial value to the European industry at large.

Nicolas Lewyckyj, PhD, presented ongoing research at the department “Remote Sensing and Earth Observation Processes” at the Flemish Institute for Technological Research (VITO – Belgium). Having a background of nuclear physicist as well as health physicist, Nicolas joined in 2004 the “Pegasus” group (see http://www.pegasus4europe.com), a new fast growing initiative dealing with High Altitude Long Endurance Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (HALE UAV). Within that group, Nicolas is focusing among others on the potential of HALE UAV’s for disaster and/or crisis management: HALE UAV carrier offer indeed numerous advantages as compared to other types of platform (satellites, manned airplanes,…).

Tom De Groeve, PhD, is a Scientific Officer at the European Commission Joint Research Centre presented his work in the area of disaster monitoring systems and emergency coordination systems in support of EU policy related to civilian crisis management. Tom heads the geospatial activities of the Critech group, specialized in developing crisis management applica-
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