

Welcome. This is the fifteenth annual NASA Space Radiation Health Investigators' Workshop. Throughout these years, we have also enjoyed the participation of our colleagues from other countries, who have contributed to a truly international scientific enterprise. In 2000, and as a result of an agreement between NASA and the Italian Space Agency, we held our first official international meeting in Arona, Italy. It was intended to encourage the efforts of our Italian colleagues to build a heavy ion cancer treatment facility, and I look forward to hearing the reports of their success at our meeting this week. The second International Workshop on Space Radiation Research took place in Nara, Japan, two years later, and it is my pleasure to welcome you today to the Third International Workshop. It is also worth noting that these international workshops have been organized by the participating scientists. There seems to be an unwritten agreement among us to hold these workshops every two years, and decisions on where to hold them have been arrived at in a most collegial fashion. There is no charter, there are no international agreements or protocols, there is just spontaneous collaboration by reasonable people. At NASA, Space Radiation Research has been affected by 3 major events in these past two years. The first of these was the approval, by the US Congress, of the Space Radiation Initiative, that enabled us to proceed with building up a critical mass of investigators and research, focused mainly on the International Space Station radiation safety requirements. The second was the inauguration, last October, of the NASA Space Radiation Laboratory. This meeting is the first where data from experiments at NSRL will be presented. Finally, and most

importantly, on January 14 the President of the United States came to NASA Headquarters and set, as a vision for us, to return to the moon and to prepare for the human exploration of Mars. In order to contribute to that vision, we have set ourselves as a goal, to assure that humans can live and work safely in the space radiation environment, anywhere, anytime. The science that is required to accomplish that will be done by you, and by the researchers that follow us. It is a challenge that transcends borders. Science is one enterprise across all nations. We have a wonderful opportunity, unique in the history of mankind, to embark on what our President has called “a journey, not a destination.” Let us get on with it!

Walter Schimmerling