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Special Staff to the Manager Hidekazu Hashimoto:

It is with great pleasure that we congratulate you on the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Ajsai Mission. This satellite has been on the Satellite Laser Ranging (SLR) schedule of the International Laser Ranging Service (ILRS) since its launch in 1986 and it continues to be used by investigators doing scientific research.

The launch of Ajsai came at a time when we had few dedicated geodetic satellites and demand for precise SLR tracking data was increasing each year due to the major efforts underway to improve the gravitational model for Earth. The data from Ajsai was a major contributor to gravity field models of the time and continues to play an important role not only in gravity field modeling but also for instrument performance assessment and calibration. The satellite legacy will continue through its long-term contribution to studies of the secular and periodic variations of Earth’s low degree zonal harmonics. Along with LAGEOS and Starlette, Ajsai its long historical impact will be felt in the record of gravitational variations that continues to be vital in the study of climate change.

Please extend our congratulations and appreciation to all of those who made the Ajsai Mission a reality.

With our best wishes and regards,

Michael Pearlman
Director, Central Bureau
International Laser Ranging Service

Dr. Graham Appleby
Head, Governing Board
International Laser Ranging Service