



CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

UNISPACE+50

High-Level Segment of COPUOS

Statement by
the Minister for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs,
Dr. Karin Kneissl,
Head of Delegation, Austria

Vienna, 20 June 2018

Mme Director, Mme Chairperson,

Distinguished delegates,

Let me start by congratulating Ms. Rosa María del Refugio Ramírez de Arellano y Haro from Mexico on her election as chairperson of the 61st session of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS) and specifically of the High-Level Segment UNISPACE+50.

I would also like to warmly thank Ms. Simonetta Di Pippo, Director of the Office for Outer Space Affairs (UNOOSA), and her dedicated team for the preparation of this High-Level-Session.

As you know, UNISPACE+50 marks the 50th anniversary of the first UNISPACE conference held here in Vienna in 1968. From Austria's point of view there is yet another milestone anniversary to celebrate this year, namely the "Silver Jubilee" of UNOOSA's presence in Vienna, as the office transferred its headquarters to the Vienna International Centre in 1993.

Since UNISPACE I in 1968, space exploration and space science have undergone crucial developments, making our gathering here even more significant and timely. UNISPACE+50 presents an excellent opportunity to reflect on our achievements so far, to shape international cooperation in Outer Space activities, to tackle global challenges collectively, and to map out our future path in the space sector for the years to come. In this regard I welcome the endorsement of a UNISPACE+50 Resolution this morning **[ABSTIMMUNGSERGEBNIS AUSSTÄNDIG bis Vormittag 20.06.2018]**. As host country, Austria appreciates this important outcome and I thank all delegations for their valuable contributions during the negotiations.

However, this UNISPACE+50 Resolution is definitely not only a congratulatory anniversary message. It is the first step towards the creation of a "Space 2030" Agenda, which envisages to strengthen the role of space as a driver of development. It fully aligns space policy with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and links its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and their 169 targets with space. The "Space 2030" Agenda will formulate a comprehensive and inclusive long-term vision for space and define the role of space activities and space tools in reaching the SDG's ambitious targets. Moreover, it is noteworthy that space science and technology can have a positive impact when it comes to tackling threats to humanity such as food scarcity, natural disasters or climate change.

Distinguished delegates,

Let me now turn to space policy in Austria. 2018 marks Austria's fifth year as a space faring nation. In 2013, the Austrian satellites BRITE-Austria/TUGSAT-1 (*sprich „BREIT“*) and UniBRITE were first launched. They are part of the nanosatellite constellation BRITE and are dedicated to the measurement of brightness variations of massive luminous stars. They continue to deliver important scientific results and demonstrate that challenging scientific requirements can be fulfilled by low-cost small satellites.

Only one year ago, in June 2017, Austria's third satellite – the nanosatellite "PEGASUS", was launched. This nanosatellite is the first satellite which underwent an authorization process under the new Austrian space legislation. This legal framework consists of the Austrian Outer Space Act and Austrian Outer Space Regulations, which entered into force in 2011 and 2015 respectively.

Distinguished delegates,

Austria is, and has always been, a committed supporter of UNOOSA and its projects. One program we attach special importance to is the UN-SPIDER Program ("United Nations Platform for Space-based Information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response"), through which space-based data and technologies facilitate early warning, timely response, as well as effective relief and rehabilitation. UN-SPIDER provides concrete added value to communities at risk and helps to strengthen the capabilities of countries to better cope with the adverse impacts of natural disasters and climate change.

Austria is very pleased that a senior scientist from the Department of Geoinformatics from the University of Salzburg was seconded to UN-SPIDER from October 2016 till October 2017.

Another area of Austrian support to COPUOS and UNOOSA is in the field of the UN space applications program. Here I want to highlight the Symposium in Graz, which is co-organized with the United Nations, and backed by the European Space Agency. It can already look back at a tradition of more than 20 years. This year's edition under the title "Space for the Sustainable Development Goals: Stronger partnerships and strengthened cooperation for 2030 and

beyond" will take place from 17 – 19 September 2018. The Symposium will yield insights and data that can hopefully contribute to the formulation of the "Space 2030" Agenda.

An additional small – but popular – Austrian contribution are the DiploSpace Breakfast sessions, organized by the Graz University of Technology and supported by the Permanent Mission of Austria. Different from what the name might suggest, these are specialized courses which aim to provide practical knowledge on space-related topics in the fields of science, technology and law.

Distinguished delegates,

Austria holds the Council Presidency of the European Union during the second half of this year. Regarding space related issues, there will be a special focus on the legislative procedures to ensure continuity and a sustainable, user- driven evolution of the EU space flagship programs like Galileo and Copernicus.

In this context, the Austrian Ministry for Transport, Innovation and Technology will organize a high-level space conference on November 5th and 6th in Graz this year. This event aims to raise awareness regarding the stakes in connection to the evolution of European space policies, and to provide useful perspectives on the following two key issues:

- New Space developments and consequences for institutions and industry, and
- Security challenges to space infrastructures.

By their very nature those two topics are global issues that need to be addressed from an international point of view.

Distinguished Delegates,

Finally, it is my pleasure to announce the reception for the Heads of Delegations I will be hosting this evening in the Albertina. Invitations by name have been sent out and you are cordially invited to join me for an enjoyable conclusion of this first day of UNISPACE+50.

I thank you for your attention.