

**Statement by The Government of The Netherlands on the
occasion of the UNISPACE 50+ High-level Segment,
Vienna 20 – 21 June**

0. Introduction

- Allow me first to thank you, for chairing this session, and Director Ms Di Pippo and the Outer Space Office, for the excellent preparation for UNISPACE + 50.
- We underline the unique opportunity for this High Level meeting, UNISPACE +50 and to celebrate the 50th anniversary of UNISPACE.
- Unispace 50+ is timely, because the use of space and satellite data in our daily lives will provide more opportunities than ever before. Let me give you one example from the perspective of the Netherlands. In the 1990s pollution was measured with a resolution of an area more or less the size of the Netherlands. In 2018 we can measure pollution on a sub-city scale! We can differentiate between pollution in the harbour of Rotterdam and pollution in the inner city of Rotterdam. With these accuracies, we can use satellite data even better to monitor and map emissions, design policies and asses their effectiveness. Furthermore, these satellite data become available at significantly lower costs than with traditional methods.

- Therefore the Netherlands welcomes the adoption of the resolution "Space as a driver for Sustainable Development" and in particular its commitment to continue to develop a Space 2030 agenda and implementation plan. Be assured that the Netherlands will be a partner in this and contribute to that process in a variety of ways. Let me elaborate on some perspectives.

1. General principles

- We welcome and support the promotion of regional and international cooperation and the engagement of established and emerging space faring nations. We need to join forces and work together in future global space activities. Promoting global cooperation through the UN and other international bodies is essential for laying the foundation of these partnerships.
- For the Netherlands we look for scientific, societal and economic relevance in our space activities.
- Our intention is always to take the point of view of the user, whether that be a scientist, a government agency, a farmer, a cardriver or a citizen. Whether they live in the Netherlands, or elsewhere in the world.
- Governments can do a lot to make space activities relevant for users by creating regulatory frameworks that do not restrict the use of satellite data, by stimulating user-friendly

access to data and signals and by ensuring the use of free and open available space data.

2. Supporting Sustainable Development Goals

- In the last decade, satellite data became available in increasing quantities and at no or very low cost. This makes earth observation applications more attractive for addressing societal challenges and monitoring sustainable development. Following the Report on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators by the UN, the National Bureau of Statistics of the Netherlands currently works on a standard for indicators on monitoring the Sustainable Development Goals internationally.
- The Netherlands supports the use of satellite data for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. For example, the Netherlands funded the *Geodata for Agriculture and Water Facility* with € 60 mln, which aims to support 4,5 million smallholder food producers by 2021. The Netherlands cooperates closely with the *Food and Agriculture Organization* of the United Nations in making data on water productivity in agriculture available.
- The Netherlands (with our European partners in the Copernicus-Programme) has been instrumental in the technical development of the TROPOMI instrument. Besides our Royal Netherlands Meteorological Institute KNMI, our scientific community and various smaller companies

developed applications in support of climate change research and air quality management.

3. Access to Space

- Madame Chair, your excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, let me also take this opportunity to ask your attention to the specific matter of getting access to the Geostationary Orbit (GEO), in particular for the developing world. It is nowadays very difficult for newcomers to obtain proper orbit and frequency rights to geostationary locations since the GEO orbit has become highly saturated.
- However the Netherlands has the view that there is another way to get access to space for developing countries and that is by obtaining international rights on Low Earth Orbits and frequencies, and to operationalise satellites in this area of space. The costs of satellites in a LEO orbit is only a fraction of the costs of satellites in GEO orbit and therefore operating satellites in LEO orbit might be a much better way to obtain access to space for developing countries. The Netherlands, in cooperation with other member states, is working towards a proposal in this respect for the next meeting of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee Committee in 2019.

4. International regulation and safety

- The Netherlands welcomes the developments that have taken place in the Long Term Sustainability Working Group of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee . We see the work in this Subcommittee as a good example of more and broader international cooperation by States, to create safe usage of outer space for current and future space operations.
- The Netherlands is the view that the sustainable use of space is a key factor in the development of space activities. Particularly the development of regulations concerning space debris is an important factor for the whole space community.
- Another point I wish to emphasise is that the Netherlands also supports the work that is being done on the potential legal models for the governance of space resources. It has participated actively in the The Hague International Space Resources Working Group. This way, the Netherlands hopes to contribute to the regulation of space resources activities.

5. Conclusion

- As space is now an indispensable part in our daily lives and for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, the global community needs clear rules and a forum where dialogue is possible to develop a global consensus. We

believe COPUOS and UNOOSA should continue to play an important role in this context and the Netherlands will continue to support the activities in this arena.

- Thank you for your attention.