

**Sixty-six Session of the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of  
Outer Space (UNCOPUOS);**

**31 May-9 June 2023; Vienna, Austria**

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**Agenda Item No. 04: General Exchange of Views**

**Statement of behalf of ISNET**

**Distinguished Delegates, Representatives and Mr Chairman**

It is my privilege to make this statement on behalf of the Inter-Islamic Network on Space Sciences and Technology (ISNET) at this sixty-six session of the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.

We are appreciative of the efforts of the Directorate and staff of the Office for planning, preparing and organizing this session in a befitting manner.

**Mr Chairman,**

Inter-Islamic Network on Space Sciences and Technology (ISNET) was established in 1987 as an inter-state organization having international status. It is also non-political, non-profit and self-governing institution working under the ambit of the OIC Ministerial Standing Committee for Scientific and Technological Cooperation (COMSTECH). ISNET is mandated to promote space science, space technology and applications for peaceful purposes in OIC member countries and to foster meaningful international cooperation amongst them.

I would like to apprise this august gathering that ISNET realizes the importance of space sector and is cognizant of the benefits that can be accrued from space technology and applications. In general exchange of views, on behalf of ISNET Secretariat I would like to present a summary of activities carried out by ISNET since year 2020.

**Mr Chairman,**

Throughout this period, ISNET Secretariat continued to achieve its goals and made progress in promoting space science and technology in OIC Countries. Utmost efforts have been made by ISNET and its member states to align its activities with UN's Sustainable Developed Goals (SDGs) in order to achieve benefit for OIC member states in terms of space exploration, socio-economic and scientific needs.

To accomplish ISNET's objectives and assist in human resource development and capacity-building efforts of its member countries, ISNET continued to sponsor participants from member countries in attending the training courses and seminars. Moreover, the activities were not disturbed even during COVID, as ISNET adjusted its approach and initiated distance learning programs. Since 2020, ISNET sponsored participants for 33 distance training/workshop, 8 webinars, 1 conference, 1 workshop and co-sponsored UN/Ghana/PSIPW 5<sup>th</sup> Intl Conference on the Use of Space Technology for Water Resources Management. Apart from the core space science, technology and application topics, activities were also conducted on space law & policy and space education & awareness.

**Mr Chairman,**

Sustainable Development Goals 2030 are the latest guidelines covering all areas of socio-economic development. ISNET being cognizant of the significant role that space technology & applications can play in achieving the SDGs, organized webinar on "Space for the Sustainable Development Goals: Implementation in ISNET Member States" in 2021. The concept of organizing this webinar was shared with ISNET member states and Iran, Jordan, Pakistan and Turkey showed their willingness to participate in this webinar. The main objective of the webinar was to present different initiatives and to elaborate roadmaps and concrete deliverables that could serve as guidance to stress the role of space in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The webinar was attended by more than 70x engineers, students and researchers. UNOOSA and COMSTECH shared their video messages and complemented ISNET for organising this webinar. For panel discussion, apart from

participating organisation, experts from APSCO and Group on Earth Observations (GEO) accepted the invitation and contributed significantly during the discussion. The event succeeded in projecting ISNET's prowess in creating public awareness and outreach in SDG's implementation through space science and technology. The webinar was all in all well received by both the national and international participants.

In continuation of ISNET's effort for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and to ensure maximum participation, the next activity on SDGs was "ISNET's Outstanding Award Program on SDGs" held in year 2022. The awards were given to the initiatives/practices that holds the greatest promise for improving our understanding of harnessing space-based technology & applications for achieving the SDG. A total of 25x applications were received. Renowned experts on SDGs, were part of its panel of judges from UNESCAP, GEO and Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries (SESRIC). The shortlisted 6x candidates were requested to send 10 minutes' video of their proposal. The video was played during the evaluation session held as sideline activity at International Conference on Space (ICS-22). As per the evaluation, the top 3x winning positions were secured by Azerbaijan and Pakistan.

### **Mr Chairman,**

ISNET Secretariat has now taken initiative to scale-up its capacity building program further. The concept is to connect the provider and recipient member countries of ISNET, by organizing series of workshops in order to enhance the skills and enrich the expertise of technical and professional staff of ISNET member countries. In this model, the "recipient" is the beneficiary country, whereas the "provider" has proven knowledge, expertise, technology and resources. Based on the workshop outcome, the aim is to later execute feasible technical projects/ research based studies. The series of workshop idea has been devised so that it can be transformed to a full fledge technical project. This initiative is a manifestation of ISNET's commitment to expand its support to results-oriented interventions and in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

The first workshop of this concept was held in collaboration with Pakistan Space and Upper Atmosphere Research Commission (SUPARCO), Centre National de la

Cartographie et de la Télédétection (CNCT) and Islamic World Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ICESCO) on “Multi Hazard Vulnerability and Risk Assessment (MHVRA)” from 7-11 Nov 2022, in Tunis, Tunisia. The workshop resulted in a forum for education, knowledge-transfer, development of new skills and professional development in MHVRA. Around 06x papers were presented and more than 50x participants attended the workshop. The workshop provided a forum for Inter-Islamic space community to share recent advancements/ technological achievements in the field of space sciences and engineering with particular focus on MHVRA.

**Mr Chairman,**

ISNET became permanent observer of the UNCOPUOS in 2013 and of GEO in 2015. In order to continually stay abreast with the space-related developments in the area of space science, technology and applications and to identify opportunities for capacity-building of the member states, ISNET acquired observer status of Asia Pacific Space Cooperation Organization (APSCO) in Dec 2020 and became Participating Organization (PO) of GEO in 2021.

**Mr Chairman,**

ISNET’s presence and participation in international space community has increased manifold that resulted in amplifying its scope and Member States involvement. This active role of ISNET has raised interest of other intergovernmental organizations as well as countries which are not OIC member states by first understanding the activities of ISNET closely before formally joining it. To facilitate such entities and streamline the collaborative process, apart from “Membership”, category of “Observer” has recently been introduced in ISNET’s Statues and Rules & Regulations. This initiative shall enable such entities to collaborate with ISNET in the field of space science & technology by providing access to wide range of capacity building programs and related activities. It will also benefit ISNET member states in development of their activities related to science and technology.

**Mr Chairman**

In the end, I would like to reiterate that ISNET will continue to play its role in facilitating the implementation of the global sustainable development agenda under any Programme of regional and international cooperation. We would like to assure you that the Secretariat of ISNET stands ready to cooperate with this Committee and UNOOSA especially in capacity-building of, and joint projects among, its Member States.

Considering this important forum, the distinguished delegates from OIC member states that are not yet members of ISNET may also consider joining the Network through their national space coordinators. Rest assured that the benefits of joining the Network greatly outweigh the nominal membership contribution.

**Mr Chairman and distinguished delegates I thank you for your attention.**

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