

Agenda Item - 3

General Exchange of Views

Madam Chair and Distinguished delegates,

At the outset, the Indian delegation would like to place on record the efforts taken by UNOOSA is conducting the 58th session of STSC under the unprecedented conditions imposed by the global pandemic due to Covid-19. We believe that, it is critical to keep COPUOS and its sub-committees functioning, to drive the international consultations to address the challenges posed by rapidly evolving global space scenario. Indian delegation also congratulates you on your steward leadership in effectively conducting the 57th session of STSC and assure you of its wholehearted cooperation and support in conducting the 58th session of STSC under the new circumstances.

Madam Chair, the Indian Space Programme, which was built on the core objective of 'exploiting the space based applications for national development and governance' has continued its success story over the years, enhancing capabilities across launch vehicles, satellites and space applications for meeting the needs of the nation.

Madam Chair, in the previous year, Indian space programme was no exception to the challenges posed by the pandemic, affecting the planned space missions. However, new operating protocols were evolved to carry out the space operations, respecting the national health guidelines to deal with the Covid-19 pandemic and space operations restarted towards the end of the year 2020. In the last year, ISRO executed 3 launch vehicle missions of PSLV, from its spaceport at Sriharikota.

Madam Chair, currently, India has formal cooperation agreements with 59 countries and 5 international agencies. The countries added to this partnership in the previous year are Bhutan and Nigeria.

The cooperative activities with space agencies of USA for NISAR; France on TRISHNA satellite mission; Japan for lunar polar exploration mission are progressing well. India and Bhutan embarked on a maiden joint satellite mission.

On the capacity building front, till date ISRO has provided training on space technology applications to 3852 officials from 109 countries, through UN Centre for Space Science and Technology Education in Asia and the Pacific (UN-CSSTEAP) and the Indian Institute of Remote Sensing (IIRS). Besides 6870 officials from 102 countries have participated in the Massive Open Online Course on Geospatial Applications for Disaster Risk Management, jointly organised by CSSTEAP & UNOOSA during October – December 2020.

Madam Chair, India continues to engage actively with developing nations for sharing its experience in using outer space for peaceful uses. India participates regularly in the annual conferences of APRSAF; GEO; ISEF; CGMS; IAC and also hosted the 34th plenary of CEOS in October 2020.

Madam Chair, India initiated a major space reform in 2020 to enable participation of private sector in space activities. The process of national legislation on space has also been initiated.

ISRO has initiated a number of measures to promote MSMEs and start-ups in space sector, like *Aatmanirbhar Bharat, meaning Self-Reliant India*, New India Challenges ARISE - Atal New India Challenge and Space Enterprise Encouragement and Development (SEED).

In conclusion, the Indian delegation would like to once again express its support to this Committee in all its endeavours towards ensuring safety and long-term sustainability of outer space activities for the benefit of entire humanity.

Thank you Madam Chair and all the distinguished delegates.