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Agenda item 8: Disaster management support

Madam Chair, Distinguished Delegates,

disasters all around the world cause severe societal damages, leading to the loss of human life and material goods. Affected people are forced to flee their homes and lose their livelihoods. Disaster risks are increasingly exacerbated by climate change and pose a threat to sustainable development and the eradication of poverty.

Space technologies can help monitor the immediate effects of disasters and guide recovery efforts, as well as observe underlying disaster risks in order to help build resilient and future-oriented societies. Germany conducts a range of scientific and operational activities in the field of Earth observation that serve the purpose of disaster management and humanitarian relief support. I would like to highlight some of these activities.

Germany continues to contribute to the International Charter 'Space and Major Disasters'. In 2020, the Charter was activated for more than 50 disasters worldwide and has reached the 700th activation in early 2021. During the last year, the German Aerospace Center, DLR, provided more than 200 TerraSAR-X and TanDEM-X radar satellite images as well as numerous RapidEye image tiles to the operations of the Charter. These data were used to support emergency response related to several flood disasters during the strong Asian monsoon season and a large number of hurricanes and typhoons experienced in 2020.

The DLR Center for Satellite Based Crisis Information also supported disaster relief efforts and produced satellite image analysis of several events last year, including the destructive fire in the refugee camp Moria on Lesbos

last September and the large-scale explosion in the harbor of Beirut in August 2020.

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We have learned from experience that space technology-assisted disaster risk reduction can be achieved more effectively through international collaboration. Germany clearly commits itself to a multilateral approach in disaster and climate change management.

This is why we continue to offer strong support to the UN-SPIDER programme. The SPEAR project, a collaboration between UN-SPIDER and the University of Bonn, enabled capacity-building activities for a wide range of countries through technical advisory missions and organized several virtual expert meetings with a focus on both African and Latin American stakeholders. The project further developed Earth observation-based tools and methods for disaster management in coordination with end-users in the civil protection communities.

In the scientific domain, DLR also uses TerraSAR-X data to support the Geohazard Supersites Initiative of the Group on Earth Observations as well as some demonstrator projects under the Working Group Disasters of the international Committee on Earth Observation Satellites.

Within Germany's national space activities, the projects "Cop4Sen" and "VALE" examine the use of satellite Earth Observations for monitoring and supporting the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, both in Germany and with selected partner countries.

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thank you for your kind attention.