

Agenda Item 8– “Space-system-based Disaster Management Support”

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Madam Chair and Distinguished Delegates,

On behalf of the Japanese delegation, I am pleased to present some of Japan’s recent initiatives and international cooperation activities related to this agenda item.

Madam Chair,

Recognizing the importance of space technology and international cooperation in disaster management, Japan has been leading a regional disaster management project called “Sentinel Asia”. Asia is often affected by a range of natural disasters, such as floods, volcanic eruptions, earthquakes and typhoons. Sentinel Asia contributes to preventing, mitigating, and reducing damage from these kinds of disasters by co-sharing satellite data in the region. Over 100 organizations in the Asia-Pacific region participate in this framework and more than 300 emergency observations have been conducted in total since its launch in 2006.

One of Sentinel Asia’s remarkable characteristics is that it is composed of space agencies, disaster management organizations and international organizations. Recently Sentinel Asia has been working to build a stronger link with the disaster management community and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction.

In this regard, we are pleased to inform you that the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for making an Emergency Observation Request (EOR) to Sentinel Asia have been recently established in Myanmar, Thailand, and Viet Nam. In accordance with these SOPs, in the case of natural disasters, stakeholders of each country will be able to make emergency observation requests to Sentinel Asia promptly, and utilize the information provided by Sentinel Asia for better response and recovery in an interactive manner. This is one of the good examples of Sentinel Asia which is mandated to address the entire disaster management cycle, and we are convinced that it is a significant contribution to the Sendai Framework Priority 4 (Enhancing disaster preparedness for effective response and to “Build Back Better” in recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction).

Madam Chair,

JAXA has been a member of the International Charter “Space and Major Disasters” since 2005 and has been actively supporting its activities in cooperation with 16 other Charter members. From November 2020 to mid-April 2021, JAXA took over as Lead Agency for the third time with great pleasure and honor. During JAXA’s lead period, JAXA has facilitated discussion among the Charter members and strengthened partnership with external organizations to expand the benefit of the Charter.

Madam Chair,

Next, we would like to share with you a case in which Japan benefited from space technologies and from international cooperation partners. From 3 to 4 July last year, torrential heavy rains hit the southern island of Japan, known as Kumamoto prefecture. The Kuma river in Kumamoto prefecture was flooded devastatingly, and almost the entire Kyushu region was affected. On 6 July, the Asian Disaster Reduction Center (ADRC) on behalf of the Japanese disaster authorities requested an emergency observation to Sentinel Asia, which was also addressed to the International Charter through the “Sentinel Asia Escalation.” We received tremendous support by space agencies and organizations that participate in the Sentinel Asia and the International Charter. We would like to take this opportunity to extend our sincere gratitude to all of you who have supported us.

Madam Chair,

Before closing I would like to reiterate that space technology plays a great role in managing natural disasters. Japan will continue to strengthen its international cooperation in this field.

Thank you for your attention.