Nepal

Statement delivered by His Excellency Prakash Kumar Suvedi, Permanent Representative of Nepal at the UNISPACE+50
June 20-21, 2018, Vienna

Madame Chair,
Madame Director of UNOOSA,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates

I congratulate Professor Rosa Maria del Refugio on her election as the Chairperson of the 61st Session of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS) and assure her of full cooperation from the Nepali delegation. I would also like to laud the preparations made by the United Nations Office in Vienna as well as the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs in connection to this session of COPUOS and its high-level segment, UNISPACE + 50.

I thank, on behalf of the delegation of Nepal, the Federal President of the Republic of Austria, His Excellency Alexander Van der Bellen for his inaugural speech to the UNISPACE+50.

Nepal fully aligns itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the G77 and China. I would like to add the following in our national capacity.

Though Nepal is not yet a member of COPUOS, we recognize it as a unique platform in the field of global governance of outer space activities. It is with this firm conviction that Nepal is taking part in the UNISPACE+50, which, I am sure, will go down as a watershed moment in charting the future of global governance of outer space activities including the "Space 2030" agenda and its implementation plan.

Nepal is a party to the **Outer Space Treaty** and the **Rescue Agreement** and is a signatory to the **Liability Convention**. Nepal believes that weaponization in outer space is dangerous for humankind as well as for environment. Nepal highly values the peaceful and beneficial uses of outer space and an enhanced international cooperation in the field of space technology.

We reiterate the principles enshrined in the **1967 Outer Space Treaty** as well as the **1996 Declaration on International Cooperation in the Exploitation and Use of Outer Space for the Benefit and in the Interest of all States, taking into Particular Account the Needs of Developing Countries**. Firm adherence to those principles by all, especially by those having relevant space capabilities, opens the door to the developing countries to put forth their interests in the exploration and peaceful uses of outer space. That also ensures the accessibility and use of outer space on equitable basis amongst states, irrespective of the level of their economic and scientific advancement.

Madame Chair,

Thanks to the progress made by the international community in the fields of space science and technology as well as the efforts made by UNOOSA, the world has now understood better that their various applications provide essential tools for addressing many of the global challenges. They have capacity to contribute to improving human living conditions by facilitating the human endeavors directed towards meeting critical human needs like shelter, food, energy, communications, transportation, health and education. It has also provided us with effective tools for monitoring and conducting assessments of the environment, managing the use of natural resources, providing early warnings and managing natural disasters.

These too are precisely the areas that we in Nepal are focusing in order to attain development and prosperity. However, Nepal has not been able to explore the space science and technology to its optimum. Moreover, our foray into international cooperation in relevant fields too is in a very initial stage.

In December 2016, the Survey Department of the Government of Nepal, in collaboration with UNOOSA, hosted a United Nations/Nepal workshop on the applications of global navigation satellite systems (GNSS) in Kathmandu. Participants from 34 different countries, representing governments, academia and research institutions attended the workshop.

The pertinence of issues dealt in that workshop was felt more in Nepal after the geodetic control network of the country was disrupted by the earthquakes of April and May 2015. We found that the GNSS technology was the only means to

rehabilitate that network. Furthermore, we have also identified that our country requires the establishment of Continuously Observing Reference Stations (CORS) in order to exploit the potentials of GNSS.

For a country like Nepal, that lies in one of the most vulnerable seismic zones in this world, the application of the space technology in the study of the tectonic movement has ~~potential to save the life and property.~~ far reaching consequences.

Inaccessibility caused by the mountainous terrain of the country ensures that the space technology is the best technology in the fields of general surveying and mapping. We are targeting to apply Real Time Kinematic (RTK) in a near future in conducting cadastral survey in the country. We are also committed to further develop our capacity of exploiting the benefits of satellite imageries in order to attain wider applications. Those applications, in broad terms, are:

- Updating the topographic map series that was produced almost two-decade ago;
- Producing Geoinformation products required by governmental and private sector actors for the infrastructure development; and
- Producing various types of land resource maps

2015 earthquake also triggered speculations about the changes in the heights of high mountains in the Himalayan region. Government of Nepal is undertaking, for the first time on its own, the task of the measurement of Mount Everest. We are relying on the application of space technology in this endeavor as well.

As a developing country, capacity-building in the use of space science and technology is crucial for Nepal in ensuring their application to support development agendas. For us such capacity development ranges from activities designed at promoting awareness of the practical uses of space technology to the support to our indigenous efforts at applying those technologies for various usages. As we are committed to enlarged usage of space science and technology, as well as to strengthen our involvement with COPUOS, we call upon UNOOSA and through it to the countries having proven space capabilities to look more profoundly into our needs of capacity development.

I am looking forward for fruitful deliberations during UNISPACE+50 and the 61st session of COPUOS.

Thank you!