Statement by Kevin Conole, Alternate U.S. Representative to the 64th Session of the UN Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space on Agenda Item 8 "Space and Sustainable Development" – August 30, 2021

Mr. Chairman, the United States appreciates the opportunity to highlight the fundamental relationship between student engagement and sustainable development and, especially during this unprecedented time, remains resolute in its efforts to inspire interest in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (or "STEM") through its unique space missions, STEM engagement activities, research, and innovations.

NASA and the U.S. government have reinvigorated the commitment to STEM education, with an emphasis on increasing diversity in our future workforce and improving scientific literacy widely.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the NASA STEM community and other parts of the U.S. Government rapidly shifted to a new virtual model of activities. NASA has led the way to create new opportunities, reinvent, and evolve efforts already underway to better reach learners of all ages, educators, communities, and institutions remotely. The NASA STEM Engagement program executed a wide-reaching set of activities for the benefit of students.

Mr. Chairman, the NASA internship program seamlessly transitioned from on-site to virtual experiences in response to the pandemic. NASA continued to provide virtual experiences in subsequent sessions, even increasing the numbers of interns, especially with underrepresented and underserved students.

Looking forward to upcoming space science breakthroughs, NASA offers an online STEM toolkit for the upcoming international James Webb Space Telescope, and will engage the public widely through community events. These plans leverage tools and lessons learned from the Mars 2020 mission, for which resources included a landing toolkit, overviews of the Perseverance rover and Ingenuity helicopter, mission images, videos and animations.

Working through a portfolio of competitive awards, NASA's Science Activation program increased its digital reach to global communities to more than 23 million across 112 countries in 2020. Leveraging the successful GLOBE program, the GLOBE Observer app allows for learners to report scientific observations of their environment.

The new "Artemis Mission to the Moon" invites high school and college students to participate in a series of NASA Student Challenges. "STEM on

Station" engages students and educators with live talks with astronauts onboard the station. Education downlinks incorporate instructional activities, often utilizing "STEMonstrations" – STEM demonstrations on the Space Station.

The U.S. Government continues to offer students the opportunity to participate in annual Hackathons and Apps Challenges. In June, NASA joined with the European and Japanese space agencies to host a special Earth Observation Dashboard Hackathon, taking advantage of powerful Earth observation tools to study environmental effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Finally, here in Vienna, the U.S. Mission offers youth from developing countries with an interest in STEM opportunities to visit the United States and learn first-hand from U.S. space industry professionals through two exchange programs. One of these exchanges is a partnership with UNOOSA and the Space Generation Advisory Council.

Mr. Chairman, NASA will support teachers and engage students in exciting activities and thought-provoking challenges throughout the school year. The NASA STEM portfolio, through U.S. and international partnerships, comprises a diverse set of activities and products designed to attract, engage, and educate learners, and to support educators, communities and educational institutions. Through these efforts, the U.S. is making vital contributions to building a strong foundation for STEM literacy, preparing the STEM workforce of the future, and increasing diversity, equity, and inclusion in STEM.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

For posting online:

Mr. Chairman, for the latest NASA STEM events, activities, and news, we encourage you to visit: https://stem.nasa.gov. Educators are also invited to explore and obtain STEM resources from a NASA website dedicated for them, which I can provide you (https://www.nasa.gov/stem/foreducators/k-12/index.html). In addition, anyone may follow NASA STEM on Twitter and Facebook social media channels, using the hashtags **#BacktoSchool** and **#NASASTEM**.