

Statement Netherlands regarding agenda item 9 (Sustainable development)

Delivered by: Mr. J.G. Kroon, Radiocommunications Agency Netherlands

Dear Mr. Chairman,

The Netherlands wishes to take this opportunity to underline the importance of earth observation for sustainable development, and the critical role of remote sensing in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Consequently, the Netherlands believes that remote sensing data should be freely available and accessible to all.

Satellite based applications for developing countries can contribute greatly to the achievement of specific Sustainable Development Goals. For example, the Netherlands is implementing a programme focused on food security where smallholders receive satellite based information and/or financial services. There are three important aspects to consider when implementing such programmes. First, digital inclusion: ensuring that no marginalised group is excluded from these services. Second, providing actionable information: meaning for example that the information provided is accessible to people that are illiterate and translated into local languages. And third, special attention needs to be paid to ensuring that data privacy is handled with care.

The Netherlands believes that especially during pandemics, and given the severity of the climate crisis, the need for satellite based digital services in key sectors such as agriculture and food is ever increasing. Satellite applications have the potential to make farmers more resilient to the impact of climate change. And digital services can furthermore be used to disseminate key information regarding public health measures to remote areas. Therefore the Netherlands believes that international cooperation is essential to realize the full potential of satellite based applications for sustainable development.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.