

**Agenda - 13: Use of space technology in the United Nations system**

Mr. Chairman and distinguished delegates,

India acknowledges and appreciates the efforts under the United Nations Programme on Space Applications, in enhancing the knowledge and experience on space applications. During the last 5 decades, these efforts have made significant impact, locally and globally. Space Applications programme in India also focuses on utilizing the technology for the benefit of society. India, as an active member of the Regional Space Applications programme for Sustainable Development (RESAP) of the UN ESCAP, is contributing to promote operational utilization of space technology and equitable sharing of benefits from space technology towards achieving the SDGs.

With the on-going ISRO's programme on space applications for societal benefits, ISRO will be happy to play a major role in implementing the space based support for capacity building and technical support for many of the plan of actions.

Mr. Chairman,

Under Regional Cooperative Mechanism of UN-ESCAP, India offered technical support to Sri Lanka on agricultural drought monitoring. Dedicated software called 'Drought Monitoring System - Sri Lanka (DMS-SL)' was conceptualized, developed and operationalized in Sri Lanka along with required training. Similar support is being extended to Nepal, Myanmar and Cambodia through UN-ESCAP from India.

India also provided the geospatial portal support under Bhuvan for the SAARC countries, high resolution satellite data and DEM data support to Bhutan and SAS satellite for addressing the communication projects.

As part of India's commitment to support International Disaster Management, satellite data support is provided under International Charter and Sentinel Asia. This year, we have supported the 70 IRS datasets to the 10 countries for the 12 disasters events. Under the Sentinel Asia Programme, 50 IRS satellite data products were provided to 12 countries addressing 24 disaster events, since January 2021. India is also providing the required assistance to establish a network of weather stations in SAARC countries to support severe thunderstorm predictions.

Mr. Chairman,

India supports the UN Desertification, Land Degradation and Drought (DLDD) programme by generating Land Degradation (LD) maps on 1:50,000 scale. A nationwide inventory of desertification status at 1:500,000 scale has been carried out using multi-date IRS AWiFS and IRS LISS-III satellite data. The study was carried out at the request of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, to cater to the needs of India's reporting to United Nations Convention on Combating Desertification (UNCCD) and to prioritise areas needing immediate action to combat land degradation. These efforts would help in achieving land degradation neutrality status by 2030.

India actively participates in the Committee on Earth Observation Satellites (CEOS) and Group on Earth Observations (GEO) including G20 initiative on Global Agricultural Monitoring, APRSAF initiative on Space Application For Environment (SAFE), Coordination Group on Meteorological Satellites, Space Climate Observatory (SCO), and committed to share its remote sensing satellite data with ASEAN countries for resource assessment and disaster management support. ISRO has also taken up as one of the priority area under CEOS, for the realization of Data Cube for BIMSTEC countries to meet the application needs towards SDGs. India also signed an agreement with BRICS Space Agencies for sharing remote sensing satellite data to address global climate change, major disasters and environmental protection.

Mr. Chairman,

In the field of capacity building, ISRO continues to share its facilities, expertise in the application of space science and technology through the United Nations (UN) affiliated CSSTE-AP located in Dehradun and Ahmedabad. As of now, CSSTE-AP has benefitted more than 2898 officials from 60 countries (37 Asia Pacific Countries and 48 outside Asia Pacific Counties). In addition to the regular courses, the Centre has organized four special courses on disaster risk reduction and emergency management for the Asia Pacific region jointly with UN-ESCAP, UN-SPIDER and SAARC Disaster Management Centre.

ISRO has extended training on Geospatial Technologies for Drought and Water Management for officials from Sri Lanka in 2019. Similarly, training on Remote Sensing Applications has been provided to professionals and students from BIMSTEC countries in 2020.

Mr. Chairman,

Indian Delegation would like to convey that as part of UNISPACE+50 initiative, India conducted two batches of the programme on “Capacity building programme on small satellite realization” (UNNATI- UNISpace Nanosatellite Assembly & Training by ISRO). It is a unique contribution providing excellent opportunities to entities in developing countries to strengthen their capabilities in assembling, integrating and testing small satellites. So far, ISRO has successfully conducted two batches of the Course of 2-month residential programme, benefitting 60 participants from 33 countries. We are pleased to inform the committee that the 3rd batch of the this programme UNNATI will be conducted during October 15 to December 15, 2022 in coordination with UNOOSA, for which registration has just commenced. We encourage member states, especially from the space aspiring nations, to apply and benefit from this programme.

In conclusion, Indian delegation reiterates the commitment to contribute for enhancement in use of space technology in the UN system towards strengthening the capabilities of member States, especially developing countries, to harness the benefits of the space technology for economic and cultural development.

Thank you Mr. Chairman and distinguished delegates.