

Statement Netherlands regarding agenda item 8 (Sustainable development)

Delivered by: Mr. A. Visser, Dutch Authority for Digital Infrastructure, The Netherlands.

Dear Mr. Chairman,

The Netherlands wishes to take this opportunity to underline the indispensable role of earth observation and remote sensing in advancing sustainable development and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

In this regard, The Netherlands believes that remote sensing data should be universally accessible and freely available, because we consider this essential to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

Furthermore, satellite-based applications in developing countries can contribute greatly to the accomplishment of specific SDGs. For example, the Netherlands has initiated a programme focused on enhancing food security, providing smallholder farmers and pastoralists with satellite-based information and financial services. From our work on this programme we learned that three crucial aspects must be considered when implementing such programmes. Firstly, digital inclusion is paramount to ensure that everyone has access to these services. Secondly, actionable information should be provided for example to those who are illiterate or need translation into local languages. And thirdly, careful attention must be devoted to safeguard data privacy.

The Netherlands believes that especially through the severity of the climate crisis, the demand for satellite-based digital services in critical sectors such as agriculture and food is ever increasing. Satellite applications have the potential to enhance farmers resilience to climate change impacts. Additionally, digital services can effectively disseminate essential information on public health measures to remote areas. Therefore, the Netherlands call on all member States to work together to unlock the full potential of satellite based applications for sustainable development.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.