

UNCOPUOS Scientific and Technical Subcommittee

61st Session, Vienna/Austria, January 29 – February 9, 2024

Statement by the Republic of Rwanda on

Agenda item 4: “General Exchange of Views”

Madam Chair, and distinguished delegates,

I am delighted to present the remarkable strides and future endeavors of Rwanda Space sector. In 2023, Rwanda celebrated three years of existence of its Space Agency and assessed the progress and achievements against its mission to support the nation’s socio-economic development through space activities.

To begin, let me emphasize that in the past year, the strategic utilization of space activities proved to be crucial for Rwanda, particularly in effectively addressing pressing challenges.

For instance, space-derived insights played a vital role in formulating plans to mitigate the disasters of flooding and landslides that occurred in Rwanda in May 2023. Space-derived data enabled us to understand the impact and make informed decisions for the safety of the population.

Allow me to emphasize a few activities achieved in 2023 in developing Rwanda Space sector:

1. The Rwanda Space Agency organized the first Rwanda Space Week, comprised of nationwide outreach activities, a national conference, and high-level consultations to streamline and advance space activities. This was a notable key event that provided a better understanding of the space capabilities to key stakeholders such as the academia, government stakeholders and the private sector.

2. Significant efforts were made to assess and develop an inclusive Rwandan Space Ecosystem. Strategic Plans for sector capacity building, incubation of startups, adequate financing of the space sector, and more were formulated. These will be important guiding tools for the development of the space ecosystem.
3. All these endeavors have better informed the formulation of our national space policy and strategic plan, which will be approved this year, as the guiding frameworks for the next 10 years of Rwanda's space program.

As an emerging player in the global space ecosystem, Rwanda continues to lead further developments of the space sector, progressing in promoting Rwanda as a host for critical infrastructure to support global space activities.

4. The development of the National Geospatial Hub has also advanced, and our applications have been crucial in supporting stakeholders in various sectors such as water management and urbanization.
5. Progress has been made in establishing Rwanda as a destination for hosting ground stations through the development of a state-of-the-art teleport and the establishment of a 9.3m ground station to support space missions and the download of high-resolution images to sustain space activities and support socio-economic clusters.

Last but not least:

6. Cooperation with academia reached new heights as Rwandan youth from different universities, given the right platforms, were able to innovate and develop real-world solutions to support our priority sectors.

Looking ahead, Rwanda through its Space Agency is strategically advancing and developing capabilities for satellite manufacturing, with efforts underway to enhance our Satcomms and terrestrial station network to address the digital divide and improve satellite-based navigation. These efforts are being enabled by a network of strategic international partnerships and collaborations that the agency has established in the global space ecosystem.

In the regulatory aspect, as the sector continues to grow, we are developing the National Space Law and other necessary regulations, that are key in enabling the right environment for the sector growth.

Madam Chair,

Our endeavors have not only benefited Rwanda but have also placed Rwanda as a valuable partner and contributor in space sustainability, fostering innovation and collaboration.

In conclusion, Rwanda through its Space Agency will continue to cooperate with all those who share our vision to demonstrate the transformative power of space activities in driving socio-economic development.

Thank you!