

Germany, Item 6

**UNCOPUOS Scientific and Technical Subcommittee**

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Statement by Germany on

**Agenda item 6: Space-system-based disaster management support**

Madam Chair, distinguished delegates,

last year, the International Charter “Space and Major Disasters” was activated 85 times worldwide for various types of disaster, marking another record year of activations. This has both a good and a bad side: On the good side, more countries are becoming aware of the opportunities offered by this mechanism and actively engage with the Charter to become authorized users, a development that we welcome. But of course, on the bad side, this is yet another reminder that climate change is getting worse and that it leads to more and stronger natural disasters. We have to increase our collective efforts to combat climate change.

Madam Chair,

the German Aerospace Center DLR supported 70 activations of the Charter last year and contributed 38 archival images as well as 170 newly acquired TerraSAR-X and TanDEM-X images to these activations. From April until October last year, DLR took over the lead of the Charter. During this time, the Charter was activated 46 times to respond to various global disaster events. Of particular note were the devastating floods in Brazil and the earliest category 5 hurricane Beryl, which caused flooding and major destruction in the Caribbean. DLR also continued to drive the development of the overall strategy of the charter. The Charter also deepened its collaboration with UNOOSA and UN-SPIDER to engage additional users in Africa through its Universal Access Initiative. This initiative is crucial to continuously expanding the Charter's reach and ensuring even more effective support in disaster situations. We want to thank all delegations whose space agencies worked trustfully and effectively with us during this

time, and we look forward to the continued success of this unique mechanism.

Madam Chair,

Last year, the German government renewed its commitment to UN-SPIDER and its office in Bonn. Over the past five years, UN-SPIDER has worked closely with the University of Bonn and its Center for Remote Sensing of Land Surfaces in the SPEAR project. The University has developed methods and tools to use space-based information for disaster monitoring and prevention. UN-SPIDER has strengthened national capacities in partner countries and identified national needs that were then relayed back to the University of Bonn and helped them develop better, more targeted methods. This positive feedback loop has yielded great results, and it will be continued in a second SPEAR project that has started last summer. We look forward to the continued successful cooperation between UN-SPIDER and the University of Bonn.

Madam Chair, distinguished delegates,

We want to conclude this statement on a very personal note. After many years of steering the ship of UN-SPIDER in Bonn, our respected colleague and dear friend Juan Carlos Villagran de Leon has left the UN system to begin his well-earned retirement. He started his journey in Bonn in 2004 and became head of the UN-SPIDER office in 2011. Under his leadership, UN-SPIDER has conducted countless Technical Advisory Missions, hosted international conferences and regional expert meetings, has expanded its network of regional support offices, enlarged and updated its collection of recommended practices, trained several Junior Professional Officers and offered insights into the UN system for many interns and visiting scientists. We are deeply grateful to Mr. Villagran for his tireless service and wish him all the best in the future, while we look forward to a new head of office to arrive soon.

Thank you for your kind attention.