

## **UK HLS Statement delivered by Dr Alice Bunn Wed 20 June 2018.**

It is an honour to speak here at the 50th anniversary of the first UN COPUOS. We have all seen astounding progress in this time and now, as more nations can participate, the space community is an exciting and fast-paced sector to work in. This makes the need for cooperation all the more necessary and we welcome the ever-increasing membership of COPUOS and think the fact that it is one of the UNs largest committees a real testament to the importance of preserving space for the benefit of all people.

The UK Space Agency understands that international engagement is fundamental to achieving our goals and objectives, and to delivering advancements in science, technology and sustainable development for the benefit of all.

The democratisation of space is reducing the cost of entering the sector in this new space era. Where the old space era saw countries race to reach the Moon first, new space is more focused on using data from space to make life better on Earth. Space technology could transform medicine, healthcare, shipping, forestry management, agriculture and transportation, and many more areas besides but we must work as a collective to maximise the benefits.

The UK Space Agency is proud of our International Partnership Programme – or IPP – which is a five-year programme with €173M (£152M) grant funding and uses the UK space sector's research and innovation strengths to deliver a sustainable economic or societal benefit to emerging and developing economies around the world. To date, IPP has funded 33 projects to the tune of €145M (£128M) through two calls in 2016 and 2017.

The programme brings together countries in need with UK organisations which use Earth observation data, telecoms, and emerging technology in new and unconventional ways, to help solve their real-world problems.

The UK Space Agency works as a conduit, liaising with local governments and supporting project teams in achieving real impacts such as projects include mapping dry peat conditions and allowing local authorities to mitigate the risk of forest fires in Indonesia and Malaysia, even below forest canopies; tracking illegal gold mining in Colombia; helping herders in Mongolia to build resilience against extreme weather; predicting Dengue outbreaks in Vietnam; and monitoring dam failures in Peru.

For example, a project called iKnowledge provides high-speed broadband coverage to 250 schools in remote locations in Tanzania to transform the learning environment. ICT equipment and training enabled by the project has ensured that 100% of the primary schools involved now have access to the internet, with 94.5%

teachers reporting improved capacity and skills post training directly reaching 16,899 students.

Another example is in Malaysia, where a project called EASOS (ee-sos) offers a situational awareness platform designed to monitor and manage flood risk, oil pollution and deforestation. Its 'Flood Watch' services were used to great effect in late 2017 to help Malaysian emergency responders to establish a clean-up and safe return to home plan for 7,000 people displaced by their worst flood event following Typhoon Damrey.

These international partnerships are a 'win-win-win' all around. They are a win in terms of maximising the effectiveness of the UK's aid budget; a win for the countries that we are working with; and they are a win for the companies that are developing the innovative solutions. We are absolutely focused on the impact and sustainability of the projects and believe that the possibilities are only bounded by our imagination and resolve to find solutions to the problems faced globally. The applications are undoubtedly varied and exciting and I could go on but there isn't time so instead, if you'd like to know more, do visit our stand as we have a brochure which provides information on all 33 projects funded to date.

However, we cannot achieve these real-world impacts without preserving a space environment that is suitable for long-term use and for the sake of future generations. This is only possible through a collective effort focused on international cooperation to ensure the safe, secure and sustainable use of space for all. This is today's challenge and not only requires the brightest and best of our scientists and engineers, but also of our policy makers and politicians. We believe in COPUOS and the UK will continue to play an active role in the ongoing discussions and debates.

The UK government sees the space industry as a critical sector and is dedicated to engaging internationally in order to preserve the environment for the future benefit of all. Thank you for listening and I look forward to working with you in the future.