

Agenda - 12: Use of space technology in the United Nations system**Mr. Chairman and distinguished delegates,**

Indian delegation notes with satisfaction wider use of space technology in the UN system towards economic, social and cultural development, and also the critical support extended by the various member states in this endeavor. 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 these sustainable development goals.

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.

We have 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.

Mr. Chairman,

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 106 IRS datasets to the 15 countries for the 25 disasters events which includes floods in Russia & Luxembourg; flash floods & Landslides in Indonesia. 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.

Mr. Chairman,

As Chair of Committee on Earth Observation Satellites (CEOS) for 2020, ISRO hosted CEOS Plenary in October 2020. India actively participates in the Group on Earth Observations (GEO) initiatives and is also supporting the G20 initiative of GEO, including the initiatives on Agricultural Monitoring, APRSAF initiative on Space Application For Environment (SAFE), Forest Observation and committed to share its remote sensing satellite data with ASEAN countries for resource assessment and disaster management support. ISRO also took as one of the priority area under CEOS, for the realization of Data Cube for BIMSTEC countries to meet the application needs towards SDGs.

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 2004 officials from 58 countries (36 Asia Pacific Countries and 22 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. India also imparts training to professionals from BIMSTEC countries on Remote Sensing Applications.

Mr. Chairman,

Indian Delegation would like to convey to this august forum that as part of UNISPACE+50 initiative, India conducted first batch of the programme on “Capacity building programme on small satellite realization” (**UNNATI- UNispace Nanosatellite Assembly & Training by ISRO**). The programme has been completed for 2 batches (January-March 2019 and Oct-Dec 2019). In the first batch, programme benefitted 29 participants from 17 countries and 2nd batch benefitted 30 participants from 16 countries. It is a unique contribution providing excellent opportunities to entities in developing countries to strengthen their capabilities in assembling, integrating and testing small satellites.

Mr. Chairman,

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.