SOUTH AFRICA

DRAFT STATEMENT

AGENDA ITEM 10: SPACE AND WATER

June 2023

Chairperson,

My delegation would like to convey sincere condolences to the *Indian* government and its people for the recent train tragedy that befallen their country and the tragic loss of life and those who were injured.

Chairperson

SA is also becoming a water scare country and that puts a great strain on the society and the economy. However the country remains committed to mitigate and monitor water scarcity, quality and any challenges that exacerbate this matter. In so doing, and in accordance with one of the primary objectives as outlined in our national space legislation, our country continues to advance scientific, engineering, and technological competencies through human capital development (HCD).

Chairperson,

Recently, through a partnership between our National Space Agency and one of our academic institutions, the University of Johannesburg, South Africa provided a tailored training workshop for its water authorities. The primary objective of the workshop was to capacitate our water authorities on the utilisation of spectroradiometer instruments to enhance scientific research in hyperspectral remote sensing for water.

Chairperson,

In the recent years there has been resurgence of tailing dam failures reported in South Africa which pose a risk to infrastructure, human health and life, and environmental damage, raising public and environmental safety concerns. One such incident, the slurry dam failure was reported on the 24th December 2021 in Ulundi KwaZulu-Natal and most recently, another failure was reported on the 11th September 2022 in Jaggersfontein town. I am happy to report that through our national space agency, provided an expert analysis report to government using remote sensing technology analyzing the mud slug damage to infrastructure, environment, and water quality to the nearby river channel and dam.

Chairperson

In response to the SDGs call, our government is engaged in a study on Goal 6, Target 6.6.1, to assess the use of satellite data in reporting on the change in the extent of water-related ecosystem over time. If the status and/or health of a wetland can be inferred from the existence and/or temporal profile of surface water occurrence, the acquired water monitoring system users of the data can assess and observe monitoring the temporal occurrence of water over time in wetlands and assess the temporal flooded or permanently inundated pan wetlands in South Africa.

The National Space Agency and National Earth Obervartion System of Systems are committed to assist other spheres of government to make use of satellite data , based on real time, such that they can be better equiped to have effective responses to catastrophes and save lives.

Chairperson, Distinguished Delegates, with these few words I thank you for your kind attention.