

UNITED NATIONS
INTER-AGENCY MEETING ON OUTER SPACE ACTIVITIES (UN-Space)

Open Informal Session
24 August 2017, p.m.
Salle C, WHO Headquarters
Geneva, Switzerland

**OPENING STATEMENT BY SIMONETTA DI PIPPO,
DIRECTOR, OFFICE FOR OUTER SPACE AFFAIRS**

Distinguished delegates,

I warmly welcome you all to an auspicious point of our history, namely our thirteenth Open Informal Session of UN-Space, and thank the World Health Organization for their support in the organization of the Open Informal Session. This event is the endeavour that bridges together the United Nations/World Health Organization/Switzerland Conference and UN-Space, the United Nations inter-agency mechanism for cooperation in outer space activities.

Distinguished delegates,

Let me start with introducing the open informal session, an interactive forum for Governments, national authorities, United Nations system entities, private sector and civil society to discuss the use of space technology within the United Nations system for the benefit of its Member States and other stakeholders. The Open informal sessions aim to achieve a stronger focus of overall policies and strategies on a particular issue of interest to Member States.

In the past, the themes of the Open Informal Sessions included: Education and training in space-related areas: challenges and opportunities in the UN system (2004); Space technology for disaster management: opportunities within the United Nations system (2005); Space technology for sustainable development and disaster management: opportunities within the United Nations system (2006); The use of space-derived geospatial data for sustainable development in the United Nations system (2007); Public-private Partnerships and Innovative Funding Approaches in the United Nations System to Promote the Use of Space Technology and its Applications (2008); Space-related activities of United Nations entities in Africa (2009); Space technology on Emergency Communications (2010); Space and Climate Change (2011); Space for Agriculture and Food Security (2012); space and disaster risk reduction: planning for resilient human settlements (2013); engaging space tools for development on Earth — contribution of space technology and applications to the post-2015 development agenda (2014), and space-based information for development (2015).

Today, the Open informal session will address the transformative potential of space technology for development: approaches and opportunities in the UN system

Distinguished delegates,

To increase your awareness of UN-Space, I would like to brief you on its history. The United Nations Inter-Agency Meeting on Outer Space Affairs is a formal inter-agency mechanism aimed at enhancing coordination of space-related activities within the United Nations system.

UN-Space generates biennial reports of the Secretary-General on coordination of space-related activities within the United Nations system. The most recent report outlines directions and

anticipated results for the period 2016-2017 and addresses the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/AC.105/1115).

UN-Space also produces special reports on selected topics, such as New and emerging technologies, applications and initiatives for space-related inter-agency cooperation (A/AC.105/843), Space benefits for Africa: contribution of the United Nations (A/AC.105/941), Space and climate change (A/AC.105/991), Space for agriculture and food security (A/AC.105/1042), Space for global health (A/AC.105/1091), Role of United Nations entities in supporting Member States in the implementation of transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space activities (A/AC.105/1116), and Space Weather (A/AC.105/1146).

UN-Space was instituted in mid-1970s to respond to the need for increased coordination of activities relating to the peaceful uses of outer space within the United Nations system. The mechanism reports to the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS), which is the primary intergovernmental body for promoting international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space, on agenda item of the use of space technology within the United Nations system.

Distinguished delegates,

The UN-Space is envisaged to become even more engaged with COPUOS in the course of the implementation of the UNISPACE+50. UNISPACE+50 process was initiated by the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space in 2015 and will be marked at the UNISPACE+50 High-level segment on 20-21 June 2018. It is expected to conclude with concrete deliverables and outcomes forming a dedicated General Assembly Resolution and a strategic vision — the Space2030 agenda and its implementations plan — for strengthening the contribution of space activities and space tools to the achievements of the Global Agenda.

Today, the open session will focus on the use of space technology within the United Nations system and its potential contribution to UNISPACE+50, including in relation to UNISPACE+50 thematic priority no. 5 on Strengthened space cooperation for global health and no. 4 on International framework for space weather services.

Distinguished delegates,

The Office for Outer Space Affairs once again joins the World Health Organization in welcoming you to the Open Informal Session and looks forward to a fruitful discussion and to making this session a success.

[[I will now pass the flow to Mr. Hans Troedsson, Assistant Director-General, acting in-charge for Health Systems and Innovation Cluster, World Health Organization, who will start today this panel discussion, and will follow his statement with my presentation on UNISPACE+50. Mr. Troedsson, you have the floor.]]