

**57th session of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee of the
United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space**

Vienna, 3-14 February 2020

Agenda Item 6. Space technology for sustainable socioeconomic development

Madam Chair, Distinguished Delegates,

Italy is strongly committed to contributing, through its space technology and expertise, to the achievement of the goals of the Agenda 2030 for sustainable development. Our active engagement in the Working Group on the “Space 2030” Agenda testifies to this commitment.

Space technologies and applications are increasingly demonstrating their potential as useful tools in promoting sustainable development. However, such potential is not always evident and the complexity of space technology does not facilitate its use by non-experts and non-spacefaring countries.

Italy believes that capacity-building initiatives can contribute to fill this gap.

Madam Chair,

the Italian Space Agency dedicates part of its resources to capacity-building initiatives and some of them address developing countries. Allow me to recall here some of the most relevant among them, such as Open Universe, the International Space Forum and the Training Course dedicated to the African countries that took place in Kenya, last December 2019.

- **Open Universe** was first presented by Italy at COPUOS in 2016 as a contribution to the UNISPACE+50. Its main goal is to promote and facilitate the visibility, free accessibility and ease of utilization of space science data and, in particular, astronomical data, by all potential users, from professionals to citizen scientists and enthusiasts. Now the Open Universe *web portal* is already operational and available to everybody on Italian Space Agency web site at the address www.openuniverse.asi.it

The initiative is advancing and, with the precious contribution of the UN-OOSA (Office for Outer Space Affairs), a Steering Board will be established in the next months. It will

include representatives of COPUOS Member States that have expressed their intention to participate in the initiative so far.

Madam Chair,

In September 2019, the fourth edition of the **International Space Forum (ISF) at Ministerial Level took place in Reggio Calabria (Italy)**, jointly organized by ASI, IAF and the Mediterranea University. The initiative aims to increase the participation of Academia and related Universities in space activities. On this point, a technical presentation has been already made last Monday of this session by a representative of the Mediterranea University of Reggio Calabria.

The International Space Forum is the result of two main considerations:

1st: space activities require a high level of technical and scientific knowledge, both in terms of infrastructure manufacturing and applications;

2nd: scientific and academic institutions possess an immense reservoir of knowledge and human talents, as well as a widespread presence throughout the world and a strong propensity for cooperation and knowledge sharing.

We believe that such characteristics could be of great support in the quest for better space solutions to global challenges. We are convinced that the dissemination of space knowledge among academic institutions around the world, enhancing their networking, would result in a considerable leap forward in space knowledge transfer and sharing, particularly in favour of developing countries. It would also result in a more widespread and better understanding of space technology as a tool to contribute to sustainable development.

Since its first edition in Trento (Italy), in 2016, the International Space Forum has become an annual gathering addressed to Ministers of Education, Science, Technology, Research and Space and representatives of scientific and academic institutions, as well as Heads of Space Agencies and members of the international space organizations.

Following the **African Chapter** that took place in Nairobi, Kenya, in 2017, and the **Latin America and the Caribbean Chapter** held in Buenos Aires, Argentina, in 2018, the International Space Forum of Reggio Calabria was dedicated to the Mediterranean region and, for the first time, it was organized in collaboration with a University – The Mediterranea University. Indeed, the **Mediterranean Chapter** witnessed the highest participation of regional universities so far.

The fifth edition of the International Space Forum will take place in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, in September, this year.

Madam Chair, Distinguished Delegates,

Let me briefly present a last example of capacity-building initiative that ASI has carried out very recently, in Kenya, namely the **Training Course on Remote Sensing, Space Sciences and Space Policy dedicated to the African countries.**

This course represents a first, concrete outcome of the International Space Forum initiative and, in particular, of its African Chapter above mentioned. It was organized in collaboration with the Kenya Space Agency and with the support of the UNOOSA. It took place at the Broglio Space Centre in Malindi (Kenya) from 9 to 13 December 2019 and provided scholarships to 12 young African students coming from Cote d'Ivoire, Egypt, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Senegal, Seychelles, South Africa, Tunisia and Zambia.

Experts and professors provided basic knowledge on remote sensing, space sciences and observations using real satellite data, and on key space law and policy issues. Besides the theoretical knowledge, students acquired hands on experience through practical activities involving the equipment and facilities available at the Broglio Space Centre.

A technical presentation will be made on this initiative later after this session.

Madam Chair, Distinguished Delegates,

Italy promotes collaborations with all Member States, in particular, with developing countries, concerning education and capacity-building activities. We really believe that international cooperation is the key element to better develop space technology for sustainable socioeconomic development.

Thank you for your kind attention.