

**Statement by Ms. Valda Vikmanis-Keller, United States Representative, on
Agenda Item 10, “Recent Developments in Global Navigation Satellite
Systems,”
February 10, 2022**

Thank you, Mr. Chair and distinguished delegates. With billions of users worldwide, the importance of Global Navigation Satellite Systems (GNSS) to the world economy is apparent. The U.S. Global Positioning System (GPS) remains a central pillar of GNSS use throughout the world, and the United States continues to engage in activities to ensure compatibility and encourage interoperability among the different GNSS services. In the 10 months since our last meeting, the United States has continued to upgrade the capability and service of GPS through the integration of the newest generation of satellites, GPS Block III, which are broadcasting the new L1C, in addition to L2C, L5 and the L1C/A signal. We launched an additional Block III satellite in the last year, bringing the total number of GPS III satellites in orbit to five, and we expect additional satellites to become available in the months and years ahead, to continue our modernization efforts. We are also designing new capabilities and enhancements that will be available on the GPS Block III F satellites, beginning with Space Vehicle 11 (SV11). In addition to the space segment enhancements, we are continuing the effort to upgrade the GPS ground control system to support the new capabilities brought on by the Block III and Block III F satellites. The new GPS OCX Next Generation Operation Control System is being rolled out in phases, and we anticipate further performance improvements and increased capabilities for all users as we complete the rollout.

The United States continues its engagement and leadership in activities related to the United Nations-affiliated International Committee on GNSS (ICG), having been a contributing founder of the organization, which originated out of the Action Team on GNSS, established after UNISPACE III. Having hosted the ICG twice, including most recently in 2015 when the tenth meeting was held in Boulder, Colorado, the United States also co-chairs the Working Group on Systems, Signals and Services, where great progress is being made on important issues, including GNSS compatibility, interoperability, spectrum protection, and interference detection and mitigation (IDM). At the fifteenth meeting of the ICG, hosted by the UN Office for Outer Space Affairs in Vienna during late September 2021, important discussions on these topics took place. The United States continues to support a recommendation adopted during the previous ICG meeting, for the development of a technical booklet on the importance of GNSS spectrum protection and interference detection and mitigation.

The United States also co-chairs a subgroup under the ICG Working Group on Enhancement of GNSS Performance, New Services and Capabilities, focused on activities to create an interoperable, multi-GNSS space service volume that will enable improved navigation for future space operations beyond GEO to even lunar missions. An updated version of a booklet on this subject was unveiled during the fifteenth meeting of the ICG. This is a new version of the booklet that was published in 2018, and was created with input from all GNSS providers. It is available for download on the ICG web portal managed by the UN Office for Outer Space Affairs.

In addition to the GNSS multilateral cooperation that takes place through the ICG, the United States has many productive bilateral relationships dealing with civil satellite navigation issues. These include both policy level meetings and technical discussions aimed at ensuring compatibility and encouraging interoperability with GPS, to the extent possible. In the last year, the United States has continued its close cooperation with the European Union on GNSS activities consistent with the 2004 GPS-Galileo Cooperation Agreement, including working level discussions on enhancements to GNSS. Additionally, the United States has engaged with Japan, India and the Republic of Korea, as a future GNSS service provider.

In conclusion, let me reiterate several key policy principles that remain centerpieces in the current U.S. National Space Policy and U.S. Space-Based Positioning Navigation and Timing Policy. The United States intends to continue to improve GPS accuracy and availability through the enhanced performance of modernized satellites. The United States intends to continue to broadcast GPS signals free of direct user charges. And, the United States is committed to keeping GPS as a central pillar in an emerging international system of Global Navigation Satellite Systems.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.