

**Statement by Kevin Conole, United States Representative, on Agenda Item 8:  
“Space-system-based Disaster Management Support,” February 14, 2022**

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Thank you, Chair. The United States is pleased to provide our annual statement on the use of space-system-based support for disaster risk management. Since last week’s devastating earthquake in Türkiye, the United States has been hard at work coordinating with all stakeholders to provide maps, data and scientific expertise to aid ongoing response efforts and risk assessments. Major concerns include damage to electrical grids, blocked roads, and damaged airports. We will continue to provide any and all needed assistance both directly and through international cooperative endeavors.

Chair, just last month, NOAA announced 2022 was another year with a high diversity of destructive disasters with damages totaling \$165.1 billion. Although the world’s focus has been on the coronavirus pandemic, there is a compounding impact from record-breaking disasters that have stricken already weakened communities, claimed countless lives, and disrupted lifelines around the world.

The United States makes significant contributions through international and intergovernmental bodies, including the UN, the Group on Earth Observations (GEO), the Committee on Earth Observation Satellites (CEOS), the Coordination Group for Meteorological Satellites, and implementing mechanisms, including the Paris Agreement and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction. This includes advancing the systems approach to Earth science and technology, contributing effective practices and protocols in Global Risk Assessment.

The U.S., represented by the USGS and NOAA, are pleased to continue our participation in the International Charter on Space and Major Disasters, which, over the last year, has proved again how such a data-sharing mechanism is a unique and invaluable approach to global cooperation in response to devastating events. NOAA and USGS jointly served in the role of Lead Agency for the Charter from May to October 2022, which included 33 activations in 22 countries; three authorized user trainings in Honduras, Panama, and Kenya; and one Project Manager training in Nigeria.

Chair, in this era of increased climate-related disasters, the value of Earth observations and global cooperation has never been more apparent. NASA advances disaster risk management through a robust Applied Sciences Disasters

Program, which harnesses Earth system data, applied science and collaborative partnerships to enhance the understanding of risk, hasten response, improve recovery, and promote resilience from disasters on local and global scales. In 2023, the Program will launch a new Disaster Response Coordination System that provides a One-NASA approach to leveraging the best science, technology, and flight capabilities available to support active disaster response.

Chair, the United States recognizes the impacts of the climate crisis are being felt today in the disasters we are experiencing. In response, the President's Emergency Plan for Adaptation and Resilience (PREPARE) calls for NOAA and other U.S. agencies to support developing countries and communities in vulnerable situations around the world in their efforts to adapt to and manage the impacts of climate change. NOAA, a recognized leader in climate information and services, will work to build capacity by sharing its global data, resources, and tools, as well as provide direct technical assistance and capacity building to developing countries. One of the ways NOAA delivers that information by working with the US Agency for International Development (USAID) and the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) to support the Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET) product, which aims to inform humanitarian assistance to drought-affected regions and provide support to reduce the human impacts of drought. NOAA contributes the climate information on drought forecasts and severity that governments and relief agencies use in assessing risks to food security and planning for, and responding to, food-engendered humanitarian crises in countries in Africa, Central Asia, Central America, and the Caribbean.

Chair, the United States is committed to assisting in the effective management of disasters worldwide and the reduction of disaster risk to promote community resilience. In closing, I would like to express our appreciation for our many international partnerships that promote free and open sharing of critical data that will lead to greater utilization of space-based information for societal benefit. Thank you, Chair.