

## United Kingdom, Item 8

### UK Statement on Disaster Management support at the 60<sup>th</sup> session of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee of COPUOS, 6<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> February 2023

Chair, Thank you for giving me the floor,

The United Kingdom would first like to express our sympathy and condolences to the people of Türkiye and Syria. Our thoughts are with all those affected by the recent earthquakes and we pay tribute to the brave first responders working to save lives. The UK is sending immediate support to Türkiye and Syria, including a team of 77 search and rescue specialists and providing vital items such as tents and blankets to help survivors with the freezing conditions. The United Kingdom stands ready to provide further support as needed.

The United Kingdom would now like to address COPUOS on the subject of Disaster Management and support.

The UK is proud to be assuming the leadership of the International Charter Space and Major Disasters in the coming months. The UK has a strong history of humanitarian support and exceptional expertise in Earth observation, which we look forward to sharing. With 798 activations for 154 countries to date, the Charter continues to provide satellite data and

support for emergency response around the world. Through the universal access programme it is available to any nationally mandated disaster management authority.

As UN Secretary-General António Guterres said, 'Nothing undermines sustainable development like disasters'. The UK acknowledges the work of the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) in building resilience and highlighting the need to address systemic risk and climate change impacts to create sustainable development pathways for all. The UK continues to innovate in disaster risk management through policy & governance, science & technology, finance & insurance, and best practice. The UK's expertise in the analysis and exploitation of earth observation, weather, and climate data from satellites is used to inform positive action and support the development of global policy.

The UK works with partner organisations and specialised bodies such as the UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, the intergovernmental Group on Earth Observations (GEO), and the Committee on Earth Observation Satellites (CEOS), to promote and develop the use of space for disaster risk reduction. Within the Committee on Earth Observation Satellites (CEOS) Disasters working group, UK scientists and the Centre for the Observation and Modelling of Earthquakes, Volcanoes and Tectonics (COMET), are at the forefront of using satellites for hazard and risk understanding. UK scientists co-lead the Volcano Demonstrator and are

making significant contributions to seismic hazard and wildfire research together with international partners.

In the field of Earth Observation, we fund and collaborate on delivering projects and missions through the European Space Agency (ESA), as well as bilateral missions and national programmes. These activities range from technology innovation and building missions - to applications, and the use of Earth Observation and other tools for decision making, using vital climate data to support mitigation, adaptation and resilience.

Through ESA, the UK is leading on the TRUTHS mission which will create a space-based climate observatory and, not only take measurements itself, but also improve the performance of other missions through calibration from space. This will enable a 10-fold improvement in the accuracy of data from EO satellites, further supporting applications for disaster management.

The UK Met Office is a leading Member of the World Meteorological Organisation (WMO). The Met Office is also responsible for co-designing and delivering the UK government's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) WISER programme to deliver transformation in the generation and use of co-produced weather and climate services to support decision making at local, national, and regional levels, building resilience to the impacts of climate change.

Chair, Distinguished Delegates, these are just some of the examples of the extensive work that the UK is undertaking in utilising space to build resilience and address disaster risk. International collaboration is absolutely crucial if humanity is going to address systemic risk and the climate crisis, and we look forward to engaging further and working with all nations in this critical endeavour. Thank you.