

Country Statement of India

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Agenda item 4 (i): Information and communications technology, science, technology and innovation

Mr. Chair/Madam Chair

Excellencies and Distinguished delegates

India appreciates the efforts and contributions of UNESCAP and the APCTT for strengthening regional cooperation in new and emerging technologies to achieve sustainable development goals (SDGs) in the Asia-Pacific region.

2. Emerging technologies such as the fourth industrial revolution (4IR) technologies offer immense potential to support the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and hence these technologies could be prioritized for supporting and strengthening the capacity of member States. This has been demonstrated during the COVID-19 pandemic, where 4IR technologies played a critical role in the healthcare sector especially for delivery of vaccines in remote areas of India through use of drones.

3. Besides, India has demonstrated many other successful examples of advanced digital technology applications including the CoWIN (the COVID Vaccine Intelligence Network), Unified Payments Interface (UPI) which is an instant real-time payment system, and Aadhar (digital identification number) based public services. These technology solutions have proved to be inclusive in nature and applications and have been successfully used to reach out to wider segments of the population of India.

4. It is necessary to identify innovative technologies and their applications from member States and promote these technologies for wider adoption in the region to address local challenges. Besides, Member States could also be supported in mainstreaming the 4IR technologies in the development process through policy and advisory support, research and analytical support, strategy/roadmap development, skill development and capacity building, and knowledge dissemination.

Mr. Chair/Madam Chair

5. India is pleased to witness the progress of Regional Space Applications for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific (RESAP), since its operationalization at the 2nd Ministerial held in New Delhi in 1999. Also, it is important to note that the idea of Plan of Action to integrate space applications in sustainable development agenda of the region was conceptualized in 2016 during the Asia-Pacific Space Leaders Forum held in New Delhi, India.

6. India has progressed well and Indian space application community has contributed for more than 100 actions out of 188, in all the 6 thematic areas. India complements efforts of Member States and UNESCAP for the achievements in the 1st phase of Asia-Pacific Plan of Action on Space Applications for SDG implementation for 2018-2022. India assures all support for the 2nd phase of Plan of Action, i.e., 2022-2026.

7. India has taken significant steps in implementing the fundamental elements of Space+ and is already integrating a host of innovative technologies with space technology in support of SDGs. One example being the effective use of “Bhuvan” geoportal during Covid-19 pandemic for many services including mapping the hotspots for delineating containment zones, locating Vaccination Centres and enabling services for food distribution.

8. India has been successful in bringing space sector reforms to enable greater participation of Private Sector in space activities. Indian National Space Promotion and Authorization Centre (IN-SPACe) has been positioned to facilitate the same. A mechanism called Space Applications Management Systems (SAMS) has been established to capture the user requirements while conceptualizing the space missions.

9. ISRO continues to share its facilities, expertise in the application of space science and technology through the Centre for Space Science and Technology Education in Asia and the Pacific (UN-CSSTE-AP) located in India. As of now, more than 3000 officials from 64 countries have been benefitted from the activities of CSSTE-AP. India acknowledges the support provided by UNESCAP for the CSSTE-AP.

10. India will continue to strive to actively engage and contribute in various activities of UNESCAP, including achieving the regional SDGs.
