Nepal's statement on 29th session of Intergovernmental Consultative Committee (ICC) on the Regional Space Application Programme for Sustainable Development (RESAP)

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Chairs
Distinguished delegates from ICC member countries
Observers

At the outset, Nepal would like to warmly congratulate the newly elected Co-Chairs of ICC29 from the Republic of Korea and the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, and extend our best wishes for the success of your tenure. We would also like to sincerely thank the Co-Chairs of ICC28 for their excellent leadership and contributions.

On behalf of the Forest Research and Training Centre, Ministry of Forests and Environment of Nepal, I wish to extend sincere appreciation to the ESCAP Secretariat, the Korea Aerospace Administration (KASA), and the Government and people of the Republic of Korea for their warm hospitality and for the excellent organization of this important event.

Colleagues,

Disasters and climate change have emerged as some of the most serious threats to sustainable development worldwide, affecting economies, ecosystems, human health, and social stability. Nepal, with its fragile topography and limited resources, is one of the most vulnerables. In recent years, we have experienced more frequent landslides, floods, glacial lake outburst floods (GLOFs), flash floods, mudflows, earthquakes, droughts and air pollution, each causing severe impacts on lives and livelihoods.

Despite limited resources, Nepal is working with determination to achieve the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, with a strong emphasis on disaster risk reduction and climate resilience. We are utilizing every means available, including Earth observation and space-based applications, to advance these efforts. I would like to highlight some of the

progress we made that are in line with the Asia Pacific Plan of Action on Space Application for Sustainable Development.

In the area of disaster risk reduction, Nepal has been applying geospatial and space technologies to monitor glaciers and glacial lakes in the Himalayas, which are increasingly at risk of outburst causing the flash flood downstream. Given the rapid impacts of climate change on these glaciers, this work is of critical importance. We are grateful for the collaboration of regional partners such as ICIMOD, SERVIR-HKH and other international organizations in this regard.

Similarly, forest fires - another frequent hazard linked to climate change are being closely monitored through space applications, enabling early alerts to be issued to relevant authorities. Weather monitoring and forecasting, flood forecasting and early warning undertaken by our Department of Hydrology and Meteorology, also play an essential role in disaster preparedness. In this effort, we are receiving valuable support from our partners, including the Government of Japan, for satellite imagery and weather analysis technologies.

In the field of natural resource management, Nepal has long utilized geospatial technology. The National Land Cover Monitoring Program, under the Forest Research and Training Centre, Ministry of Forests and Environment, produces periodic land cover and land cover change maps aligned with IPCC categories. These maps have proven to be vital resources for the effective management of forests, biodiversity, and agriculture.

In addition, with the support of the Government of the People's Republic of China, our Survey Department is conducting land resource mapping using high-resolution satellite imagery, which has proven highly effective for land management and land classification. Furthermore, in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture, we are exploring the use of geospatial technologies to monitor crops and accurately estimate production which would be vital for the efforts for ensuring food security.

In the area of climate change, Nepal is strengthening its capacity to apply geospatial technology for vulnerability and risk assessments, GHG emission inventories, and carbon stock monitoring. These tools also complement our REDD+ initiatives by helping to monitor carbon emissions and sequestration, thereby supporting results-based payments for conservation and sustainable forest management.

Chairs, Distinguished delegates,

Given that Nepal is gravely affected by climate change despite its negligible contribution to global greenhouse gas emissions, climate change adaptation is an urgent national priority to safeguard our economy, communities, and livelihoods. Space-data applications are playing an increasingly important role in our climate change resilience by identifying vulnerable areas, supporting adaptation strategies.

In conclusion, Nepal is actively engaging in national, regional and international cooperation to enhance its capacity in geospatial applications and is committed to advancing the goals of the Asia-Pacific Plan of Action 2018–2030. We recognize that greater coordination within national institutions, and stronger regional and international partnerships, will be essential to achieve these goals. As one of the least developed countries, Nepal continues to face resource and capacity constraints and therefore seeks expanded support to fully harness geospatial and space applications across all sectors, including accessing high resolution satellite imagery, drought monitoring, air quality monitoring, and comprehensive flood risk resilience.

Finally, I would like to express Nepal's deep appreciation for UN ESCAP's ongoing efforts to foster regional cooperation under the Asia Pacific Plan of Action. We look forward to working together in the current and upcoming phases with the same spirit of solidarity. Nepal remains firmly committed to cooperating with regional and international initiatives to achieve our shared sustainable development goals.

Thank you.

Seoul, 03 September 2025