Earth Information Day
Statement delivered by Markus Woltran on behalf of
UNOOSA Director Ms. Simonetta Di Pippo

Distinguished Participants,

It is with great honor that I have the opportunity to deliver today these remarks on behalf of Ms. Simonetta Di Pippo, Director of the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs. Director Di Pippo sends her regrets for not being able to join you in this important discussion today and wishes all participants, attendees and contributors fruitful exchanges on the occasion of the Earth Information Day.

As we have already heard in the different presentations and contributions today, only through satellite technologies we are able to understand our changing environment and react accordingly.

The recently published "Space for Net Zero" report by the World Economic Forum emphasize this critical role of space technologies and calls for global collaboration. According to the WEF's Global Future Council on Space, to which Director Di Pippo serves as a Co-chair, we need to consolidate our efforts of researching and measuring Earth System Variables. The report strongly recommends the establishment of an Earth Operations Center that leverages space data and expertise to conduct global interdisciplinary sustainability science. Through the consolidation of global climate science, we can get the best possible understanding of global climate change which we can then translate into physical visualization and earth information to support international decision-making.

For such a collaboration to be possible and to succeed, integrated data and interoperability of systems, as well as a multilateral collaborative environment, are paramount. Promoting interoperability and strengthening international cooperation in the use of space science and technology is indeed at the core of the work of the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs.

For over a decade, OOSA in its role as secretariat to the International Committee on Global Navigation Satellite Systems has focused on the promotion of interoperability standards and global collaboration for space applications. Furthermore, UNOOSA is also involved in the further development of the Space (for) Climate Observatory. This initiative addresses exactly those needs outlined and highlighted in the WEF "Space for Net Zero" report. The SCO is determined to be a valuable tool for decision- and policymaking on climate change mitigation and adaptation by building on interoperability, international collaboration, and knowledge sharing between its participants.

Different initiatives, activities, research projects and posters presented during the Earth Information Day session show how many efforts are being taken at international, national and local level. Indeed, Space is used everywhere and the space community has to connect the "Providers of Space Knowledge" to the "Users of applications" to combat climate change effects, adapt, prepare and mitigate.

Here, not only the UN/Austria World Space Forum on "Space4Climate Action" hosted entirely virtually from 07. – 09 December comes into play but also a recently initiated process by the Government of Austria. UNOOSA has long been working to promote, strengthen and deliver targeted capacity-building and technical advisory activities, facilitate multi-stakeholder collaboration, and promote efforts to encourage the use of space for sustainable development as well as to facilitate interoperability of space data. The recently launched "Space4Climate Action initiative" by the government of Austria is building forward on exactly on this expertise and aims to close the capabilities gap, support a more inclusive and diverse environment in order to maximise both direct and indirect contribution that a strong space sector can have for climate action.

Political commitment to collaboration and the interoperability of systems and data will go a long way to further the global understanding of climate change and our capability to act on it. UNOOSA is very much looking forward to contributing to these exchanges and stands ready to facilitate access to and usage of Space data for Earth Information and an evidence-based decision making.

Thank you