



## **Hanoi Conference on Illegal Wildlife Trade in Viet Nam “Bytes Beyond Continents: Advancing Evidence-based Environmental Governance”**

Hanoi, Vietnam, 18 November 2016

### **Message by Simonetta Di Pippo Director, United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs**

Dear Conference Participants, dear Conference Organizers,

On behalf of the United Nations, it is my great pleasure to address you at this Hanoi Conference on Illegal Wildlife Trade and to thank you for your kind invitation to join this conference. Unfortunately other activities in my schedule do not allow me to attend in person. I therefore greatly appreciate the opportunity given to me by the conference organizers to contribute to your discussions with this statement.

#### ***[UNOOSA and its role]***

The Office for Outer Space Affairs (UNOOSA) was established in the late 1950s, soon after the launch of the first satellite, Sputnik-1. The Office is the secretariat of the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS), which is the only committee of the United Nations exclusively dealing with international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space and, as such, has been instrumental in developing an international governance of space activities.

The many benefits of applications of space technology were recognized by the world community soon after the beginning of the space age, for example:

- monitoring our planet through Earth Observation satellites from space;
- providing global communication services through satellite communications; and
- using Global Navigation Satellite System for positioning, navigation, timing and tracking applications.

To support countries to build their capacity in the use of space science, technology and applications, since 1971 UNOOSA has been implementing the United

Nations Programme on Space Applications. More than 21,000 participants have attended over 300 UNOOSA training activities in the last 45 years.

***[UNOOSA and its role in capacity building]***

As you may be aware, the United Nations – and indeed the international community - has embarked on a mission to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals. Today's world is already facing many global challenges and continuing population growth will put further increasing pressures on our planet. It is only through science, technology and evidence-based policy and decision making, including in the field of environmental governance, that we will be able to meet the Sustainable Development Goals.

UNOOSA, through its Programme on Space Applications and other mechanisms, is working closely with United Nations Member States to ensure that space technology and its applications will be used to the fullest extent possible to help us implement the 2030 Agenda.

***[Biodiversity, ecosystems and wildlife-crime]***

In particular, Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 14 (Life below water), SDG 15 (Life on land) and SDG 16 (Peace, justice and strong institutions) are at the centre of your considerations at this conference. I am very pleased to recall that UNOOSA and several key stakeholders in the wildlife and ecosystem community came together only a few months ago to organize the United Nations/Kenya Conference on Space Technology and Applications for Wildlife Management and Protecting Biodiversity.

This conference was held at the headquarters of the United Nations Environment Programme in Nairobi, Kenya, from 27 to 30 June 2016. At this event we addressed how space technology and applications could specifically contribute to the protection of wildlife, biodiversity and ecosystems. Presentation and discussions focused on solutions such as:

- high-resolution satellite imagery for use in Geographic Information Systems, including in the Wildlife Enforcement Monitoring System (WEMS), which can be used in support of evidence-based decision making
- Global Navigation Satellite Systems to track animals or to guide drones and wildlife park rangers

- satellite communications to meet the demand for communication services in areas with insufficient terrestrial coverage.

I invite you to visit the UNOOSA website ([www.unoosa.org](http://www.unoosa.org)), where you will find the conference programme, all presentations and posters, and soon also the conference report with the observations and recommendations made by the conference participants (Direct links:

<http://www.unoosa.org/oosa/en/ourwork/psa/emnrm/biodiversity.html> and

[http://www.unoosa.org/oosa/en/ourwork/psa/schedule/2016/conference\\_kenya\\_biodiversity.html](http://www.unoosa.org/oosa/en/ourwork/psa/schedule/2016/conference_kenya_biodiversity.html)).

### ***[2030 Agenda and UNISPACE+50]***

Let me also take this opportunity to inform you about the ongoing efforts of the international space community to develop a new agenda for space governance, which will culminate in June 2018 in an event called UNISPACE+50. UNISPACE+50 will be a special segment of COPUOS to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the first United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and set out a pathway for the future of international space cooperation. In preparation for this event we are organizing the United Nations/United Arab Emirates High Level Forum: Space as a Driver for Socio-Economic Sustainable Development, which will be held in a few days in Dubai from 20-24 November, and which is one of the reasons why I cannot join you in Hanoi today (<http://www.unoosa.org/oosa/en/ourwork/hlf/first-hlf-meeting.html>).

### ***[Conclusions]***

In closing my statement, let me wish the organizers, the Asian Institute of Technology, and all of you a successful and fruitful meeting. I and my colleagues in UNOOSA will be looking forward to hearing about the results of your discussions.

We are ready to build on the success of the recent UN/Kenya Conference and to continue working together with you to advance evidence-based environmental monitoring, including for combating the illegal wildlife trade, through the use of information and space technologies and applications. You can count on UNOOSA in this challenging endeavour!

Thank you.