

STATEMENT BY H.E. DR. JERRY S. UGOKWE, AMBASSADOR OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA TO THE REPUBLIC OF AUSTRIA, AND PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF NIGERIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS (UN) VIENNA, AT THE THIRD MEETING OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE ON GLOBAL NAVIGATION SATELLITE SYSTEMS (ICG) IN PASADENA USA, 8TH TO 12TH DECEMBER, 2008

Mr. Chairman

We are happy to see you as Chair of this Third Meeting of the International Committee on Global Navigation Satellite (ICG). There is no doubt that your wealth of experience will guide us to a successful end. We also thank the organizers of this meeting as well as all participants for this wonderful opportunity to brainstorm on issues that are topical on the Global Navigation Satellite Systems (ICG).

Mr. Chairman,

One of the prerequisites for meeting the challenges of sustainable development of any nation is the ability to manage its resources and monitor its environmental status as well as its variations in time and space. Earth observation, especially, satellites for remote sensing, navigation and meteorology, play vital roles in this regard, particularly in the acquisition of geospatial data-based information in a very timely

manner, providing a crucial input required for carrying out operational and viable programmes and projects.

Reliable and timely information is critical to all aspects of human development. Space science and technology is increasingly becoming a major source of information gathering and a force in shaping the development of the global economy and sustainable development of many nations, especially in the areas of wealth creation, environmental sustainability, poverty alleviation, education, food security, healthcare delivery and preservation of fundamental life support systems.

The National Space Research and Development Agency of Nigeria (NASRDA) remains the primary focal point for space activities and applications in Nigeria. In recognition of the strategic role of space in nation building, Nigeria has taken interest in adopting space technology as part of the overall national development strategies.

Like many societies of the world, Nigeria is embarking on initiatives and development agenda that would address or redress the problems of:

- Poverty and food security,
- Infrastructural development and sustainable energy,
- Affordable health delivery system and housing
- Protection from, and mitigation of natural and man-induced disasters.

For Nigeria, space technology is key to the realization of these objectives as it guarantees the availability and speedy access to real-time data and geospatial information for planning and decision-making with a great impact on good governance.

Mr. Chairman,

Nigeria launched its first earth observation satellite, NigeriaSat-1, in September 2003 and validated the images from this satellite for use in various areas of sustainable socio-economic development. To maximize the benefits of the launch of NigeriaSat-1, the Agency encouraged and promoted the utilization of data from NigeriaSat-1 through a robust data pricing policy including offer of free data for research in tertiary institutions. Given the fact that no single satellite or image resolution satisfies all of the numerous applications of space-

delivered data for sustainable development, data from NigeriaSat-1 are being used and will continue to be used in combination with data from other relevant satellites.

Consequently, a number of viable projects have been carried out as a way of demonstrating the potentials of space product from NigeriaSat-1 and other satellites for the socio-economic development of the nation. Some of the immediate priority application areas of remote sensing satellites for national planning and development in Nigeria are worth enumerating.

In the field of agriculture and sustainable food security, a project titled **“Development of early warning Systems for Food security in Nigeria using NigeriaSat-1 and other Satellite Data”** , has been completed. The aim is to attain sustainable agricultural productivity and national food security. This project has impacted positively on the agricultural stakeholders’ ability to develop sustainable agricultural systems, improve production and quality, reduce losses and risks, decrease cost, increase efficiency in the use of water, labour and

energy, conserve natural resources and decrease pollution by agricultural chemicals.

Mr. Chairman,

NigeriaSat-1 has also been utilized in environmental monitoring, especially in the sensitive ecosystem of the Niger Delta. Phase 1 of the project titled: **"Satellite-based Environmental Change Research in the Niger Delta,"** has been completed. The second phase of the project is on-going. This project facilitates the investigation of the environmental changes that have taken place in the Niger Delta Region before the advent of oil exploration and the present time, and their socio-economic implications, using geospatial techniques and socio-economic data in an integrated framework. The purpose of this project is to create awareness on the extent of damage to mangrove forest as it affects the people of the Niger Delta. The project is in support of the government reform on Niger Delta Development.

Similarly, NigeriaSat-1 has been effectively deployed in the mapping and monitoring of the impact of gully erosion in the South East of Nigeria. The objective of the project is to demonstrate the potentials of image data from NigeriaSat-1 in mapping and monitoring gully erosion spread

ssin South Eastern Nigeria. It is expected that the project will assist in formulating appropriate policies and strategies in combating gully erosion in Nigeria. There is also the expectation that the project will bring about environmentally-sound modification of policies and decision-making processes relevant to land degradation due to natural and man-induced activities.

There are other projects which are on-going such as the development of **Optimum Geodes and Geodetic Network for Nigeria: An analysis of the migration and settlement patterns of nomads through the application of remote sensing**. When completed, the project will be very useful to the implementation of agricultural reform policies of the Federal Government within the context of attaining efficiency in using irrigation to accelerate food production. Further work plans in the area of agriculture and food security as well as in infrastructural development are also being developed.

Mr. Chairman,

The aforementioned projects, both completed or on-going as well as those embedded in our future plans underscore the importance and effective utilization of NigeriaSat-1 for the socio-economic development

of our economy. My delegation therefore subscribes to the view that there is the urgent need for experts in the space industry to raise awareness among the public, of the benefits of space technology for social and economic development especially in developing countries where the need for rapid sustainable development to meet the Millennium Development Goals, is compelling. We also believe that sharing scientific and technical knowledge and achievements in the field of space science and technology would have a positive impact in ensuring an efficient utilization of the resources of our shared environment. It is against this backdrop, Mr. Chairman, that we appreciate the relevance and the contributions of this forum to global socio-economic and scientific development. Nigeria will continue to cooperate with other countries in this regard.

Thank you.