

SPEECH OF CHAIRMAN SUPARCO
SPACE TECHNOLOGY CONFERENCE (STC-2022), TASHKENT, UZBEKISTAN
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Bismillahir-Rahmanir-Rahim

Excellencies, Eminent Participants, Distinguished Guests

Ladies and Gentlemen

Assalam-o-Alaikum and Good Morning

It is indeed a privilege for me to address this august gathering. This conference provides a great opportunity to look towards the future course of global space cooperation and the role of space technology in achieving sustainable development. I would also like to convey my sincere appreciation to the Space Research and Technology Agency of Uzbekistan (UZBEKKOSMOS) for their dedicated efforts in organizing this event to bring together space leaders and experts for exchanging ideas, initiate new partnerships and enhance international space cooperation that will significantly contribute to the attainment of the socioeconomic development in the region.

Ladies and Gentlemen

Ever since the launch of Sputnik 1 in 1957, space technology has influenced humankind in ways that were earlier considered unimaginable. In the past seven decades, space technology has improved the quality of life on Earth. The economic impact of space technology is significant, not only in directly related fields but in other sectors which use but are not necessarily dependent on space technology. The space sector results in productivity gains, commercial revenues, increased employment, food safety, technological transfers, etc. It is estimated that the activities of the space

sector resulted in an annual global commercial revenue of \$447 billion in 2020 (published in 2021 Space Report of Space Foundation, USA).

Ladies and Gentlemen

The Pakistan space program has progressed since inception and has contributed notably to the country's economic growth. Pakistan Space and Upper Atmosphere Research Commission (SUPARCO), being the national Space Agency of Pakistan, is mandated to utilize and promote the use of space technology and its applications for achieving sustainable development targets. SUPARCO has been coordinating with national and international organizations for the development of space based solutions in number of areas. SUPARCO has completed numerous important projects in Pakistan and few other countries related to Agriculture, Disaster Management, Forest Estimation and Monitoring, Environment and GIS based Governance/ Planning, all of which were focused on achieving the defined sustainable development targets. Similarly, based on experience and expertise gained, I can very confidently state that space technology is a driver for socio-economic development in any region of the world especially Eurasia; which is characterized by unique geography, environment and demography.

Ladies and Gentlemen

I believe that space based services in the following fields can pay rich dividends from socio-economic perspective.

- Monitoring of crops through satellite technology, use of advance techniques for yield forecasting to ensure food security and better crop damage assessment after natural disasters and distribution of compensation packages.
- Monitoring, forecasting and mapping of various natural hazards and damage assessment of affected areas; sharing of data and expertise through various international and regional forum like UN-SPIDER and UNESCAP etc.

- Monitoring of forest sites on regular basis to keep track of afforestation or deforestation;
- Environmental impact assessment of an ecosystem, temporal monitoring of changes in air, water, bio-diversity, desertification, etc. Similarly, carbon stock assessment and measurement of pollutants also yield societal benefits.
- Serving the dispersed and remote population with TV, cellular, and internet services is best possible through satellite communication. Associated advantages include tele-education and tele-medicine; greatly improving socio-economic development.

Ladies and Gentlemen

In the end, I must emphasize that there is no denying the fact that space activities have a positive and beneficial impact on everyday life and society. Space technology has become an unavoidable and necessary aspect of human life and will continue to be an essential driver for opening new domains in science and technology, triggering other sectors to partner with it for optimizing advantages to be accrued and achieve sustainable development.

I am once again thankful to the organizers for affording an opportunity to dilate on role of space technology for socioeconomic development. I am confident that this conference shall draw productive and pragmatic outcome.

Thank you for a patient hearing.