

**KENYA'S STATEMENT TO THE ISF-AFRICA CHAPTER TO BE HELD IN
RADISSON BLU HOTEL, NAIROBI ON 13RD FEBRUARY 2018**

Space technology and its derived data has enormous potential to catalyze the socioeconomic development of the Africa continent. Kenya has used Satellite technology to provide critical information to inform decisions in disaster management, farming, conservation and monitoring of natural resources, communication, navigation, among others. This technology offers great potential towards solving problems in developing countries. However, it is noted that developing countries are not using satellite technology to its full potential due to lack of funds, expertise, equipment or awareness.

The Government of Kenya, in appreciation of the immense potential of space technology to socio-economic development, established the Kenya Space Agency under the Ministry of Defence in 2017. The Kenya Space Policy and Kenya Space Strategy were also approved in the same year to govern and guide the development of an indigenous space sector. It has been an honor to host the first Regional International Space Forum - Africa Chapter 2017

The Forum has been fulfilling because of the discussions on the THREE agenda items that are critical in addressing the challenges that African countries, as well as other developing countries, are facing as they embark on nurturing their space sector. We have all attested these agenda items which are; the need for capacity building as well as space partnerships and the potential space technology to support environmental sustainability.

On Capacity building: Africa still lags behind in building its capacity in Space related disciplines which has resulted in the continent missing out on opportunities to create jobs and grow our economies. Africa hosts numerous institutions involved in capacity building in the space sector, one such institution that Kenya proudly hosts is the Regional Centre for Mapping of Resources for Development (RCMRD).

RCMRD was established in 1975 under the auspices of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) and the African Union (AU)

currently with 20 African member states. Its mission is to promote sustainable development in the member States through generation, application and dissemination of geo-information and is also actively involved in training in space related disciplines.

However, very few Universities in Africa offer space related training and there is needs to establish such educational programmes, and where they exist strengthen them. There is also need to establish collaborative programmes with space faring countries to benefit from current technology and innovations in the space arena.

On Environmental sustainability: Africa is endowed with abundance of natural resources. It is observed that most of our countries have not mapped them and there could be more that we are yet to discover. Satellites, and in particular Earth Observation satellites, offers Africa precious tools to continue gathering and documenting information on our abundance resources and also provides a means to monitor their exploitation.

Many cities and towns in Africa are not properly planned which results in numerous challenges in providing requisite amenities. Satellite imagery can help us plan our towns and the supporting infrastructure as well as map out corridors for future growth.

Kenya is home to numerous game reserves and parks. Due to growth population, human settlement has expanded into migration routes and areas reserved for environmental conservation. With the help of satellite technology, Kenya has mapped out migration routes to avoid human-wildlife conflict. This is just one example of the application of space technology. The technology is also used to monitor Kenya's forests to discourage illegal logging, monitoring areas where the deserts are expanding to and launching mitigation measures. Other uses include monitoring the weather to give forecast to farmers and in case of anticipated weather related disasters give warnings to affected communities in good time and aid in disaster mitigation.

On Space partnerships: In 2016, the African Union (AU) Summit adopted the African Space Policy and Strategy. Kenya supports the implementation of the Africa's space policy and strategy in driving Africa's indigenous space programme to create awareness on the potential role of space science and technology in spurring Africa's socio-economic development, while building our capacity and capability to actively participate in the global space arena.

Kenya will continue to support African initiatives that seeks to advance the growth of the space sector in the region. Examples of such initiatives include the Square Kilometer Array (SKA) and African Resource Management Constellation (ARMC). The SKA project will be a collection of hundreds of thousands of radio antennas with an area equivalent to one square kilometre (world's largest antenna) being spearheaded by South Africa. Kenya's Longonot satellite antenna has been identified for conversion into a radio antenna.

The ARMC is an initiative involving Nigeria, South Africa, Algeria and Kenya (as well as other African Agencies) that is meant to develop a constellation of satellites to provide real time, unrestricted and affordable access to satellite data for member countries and the region, The initiative will guarantee access to space, support effective environmental and resource management in Africa.

In conclusion, Kenya appreciates and reiterates that space science and technology has the potential to ignite a technology revolution in Africa and this could immensely benefit our region in terms of building the requisite human capacity in space related disciplines, create jobs in the space industry and other support industries. This is expected to lead to having spin-off companies and technologies from such ventures. At the heart of it all would to promote the socio-economic development of our continent.