

**International Space Forum – The Latin America and Caribbean Chapter
Buenos Aires, 1 November 2018**

Statement of Italian Space Agency

Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates,

It is an honor and a special pleasure to be here in Buenos Aires at the **International Space Forum – The Latin America and Caribbean Chapter** dedicated to Space Science and Academia for better solutions to Latin America and Caribbean's Challenges.

We decided to focus this 3rd International Space Forum on “**Space Science and Academia for better Solution to Latin America and Caribbean's Challenges**”, because we are convinced that knowledge and expertise existing in the space Academia can and should be used to find better solutions to the global challenges that afflict humankind and many regions of the world.

In the last decades, the Latin American and Caribbean region suffered from several large natural disasters whose magnitude, in terms of fatalities and damages, has renewed national governments' interest in better managing risks and hazards. The sources of risk in the region are both natural and man-made. Because of its geographical conditions, the region is prone to natural events of severe intensity.

A comprehensive approach to disaster management, which attempts to maximize protection of welfare through an adequate policy-mix, is needed, focused on the adoption of proactive policies for risk identification and reduction programs. In this direction Space capabilities and infrastructures can transform the daily life and provide effective tools to achieve economic and social benefits, the same benefits that are at the core of the United Nations Agenda 2030 and its goals.

I would like here to briefly highlight just a few examples of current activities that ASI is pursuing in the three main topics that we have chosen for our discussion today.

- **Management of natural resources and Prevention of disasters**: Since 1996 Italy started the realization of a national earth observation program equipped with Synthetic Aperture Radar operating at X-band, the COSMO-SkyMed Constellation, able to cover the whole planet. The first satellite of COSMO-SkyMed constellation has been launched on June 2007. The first constellation composed of four satellites is operational by 2010 dedicated to the environmental monitoring and surveillance applications for the management of exogenous, endogenous and anthropogenic risks.

- Since 2005 ASI and CONAE are developing the unique, civil, earth observation satellite system, **SIASGE (Italian Argentinean System of Satellites for the Management of Environmental Emergencies and Economic Development)**, composed by the Italian COSMO-SkyMed radar satellite constellation in X band and the Argentinean SAOCOM radar satellite constellation in L band.

It was a great honor for me to be able to witness the launch of SAOCOM 1A from the US Vandenberg Base in California last 8 of October. The second SAOCOM 1 B will be launched next year.

The data provided from the SIASGE constellation will represent a concrete help for emergency response, disaster risk prevention and for the management of natural resources for the benefit of all the Latin American and Caribbean region.

The improvement of disaster risk management appears essential to guarantee the protection of the natural resources and the future progress of the economic and social development of the region.

- **Space partnerships**: the SIASGE constellation represents also a good and effective example of space partnership, which demonstrates what can be achieved through a reliable international cooperation. In fact, thanks to a joint plan and architecture of orbits, observation angles and revisiting time, the SIASGE system is able to collect and merge many radar data in L, X and L+X bands.

The ASI Geodesy Space Station in Matera (Italy) and the CONAE Teofilo Tabanera Station in Cordoba complete the Italian and Argentinean partnership in a balanced alliance in terms of ground segment participation, resources investment and common advantages.

Italy and Argentina have already invested for the future partnership having engaged in the second generation of SIASGE, currently in phase of realization.

- **Education and Capacity building**

Finally, ASI is firmly convinced that a greater involvement of Academia in space programs and activities is one of the key factor for sustainable development and socio-economic growth of the region.

Since the beginning of the SIASGE concept, it was clear that this unique system needed a skilled experts to manage a large and very different community of users worldwide. In this sense, ASI and CONAE agreed to start a massive and regular program of local human resource education, combined with capacity building training.

The on-going cooperation between ASI, CONAE and the University of Cordoba, related to the Mario Gulich Institute in Space Advanced Studies and open to all the region needs, is another relevant example of a farsighted vision.

Since 2001, the Gulich Institute has trained around 300 student and young professionals from Argentina and other countries of Latin America, in cooperation with Italian Universities and Research Centers. In 2010 a two-year joint Masters Course in "Aplicaciones Espaciales de Alerta y Respuesta Temprana a Emergencias" has been established to guarantee a regular, comprehensive and detailed program on space information data system.

Finally, as mentioned this morning, today, at this Forum, I would like to launch the proposal to organize, at the Gulich Institute in Cordoba, Space Summer Sessions on different focused space themes, in order to promote knowledge and capacity transfer for all the countries in the Latin American and Caribbean region.

Space international partnerships are essential for the success of the initiative. In this sense, we welcome expertise, support and sponsorship by public and private entities.

Thank you, for your kind attention.