

Statement by Mr. Raivo Tamm, Chairman of the Estonian delegation to the European
Interparliamentary Space Conference (EISC)
at the **EISC 2021 Plenary Session** on the topic of *Space and Satellites in the Arctic*
10 May 2021

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Honourable Guests,

Dear Colleagues,

I am very glad to greet and see you all here. I hope you're all well and safe during these difficult times and the next time we could all meet in person. COVID-19 pandemic has had a huge impact on space sector across the world – delayed launches or missions and the way we interact with each other.

The Estonian delegation is delighted to hear that this year's plenary session focuses on the topic of Space and Satellites in the Arctic. We welcome the Arctic activities and as maybe many of you have heard Estonia is currently applying for observer status on the Arctic Council to contribute to the sustainable development of the Arctic. We believe that Arctic has much to gain from the space sector and also to offer for the space sector.

The Arctic is a challenging region considering its vast distances, difficult weather and the fact that for much of the year it is dark. Although increasing, Arctic populations are small. Space technologies have many attributes that make them ideal for application in the Arctic context: satellites can see remote areas that could not be accessed in any other way, they can cover wide areas with relatively little infrastructure and they can provide types of information that are not available from any other source. Space technologies can contribute to Arctic policy priorities in many areas: Communication, Earth Observation, Navigation, Surveillance, and Science. The Arctic itself can offer Europe additional launch sites for example.

As I announced during the previous EISC meeting that Estonia has initiated the process of preparing its National Space Act with the aim of regulating the registration and operation of space objects, and the responsibility between the state and the private sector.

By writing national space law we should always think how to enable more than forbid, but on other hand also guarantee the sustainable development of the space ecosystem.

The main objective of the Estonian National Space Act is to enable access to space but also to protect our national interest.

We are known for e-State - cyber security and e-governance. This knowledge will provide us an excellent opportunity to contribute to the development of a global Space Traffic Management platform. A platform and e-service which would enable safe and secure streamlined communication between governments and satellite operators.

Such an approach will enable international collaboration with the aim of safe and secure space object operation.

Today Estonia has established a national Space Traffic Management working group, a cooperation between government, universities, and private sector, to propose an e-estonian solution for space traffic management collaboration.

I hope that in the future we will all have the possibility to meet physically and hold a discussion on the space legislations including the topics of e-governance and the Space Traffic Management. Until then, stay healthy and take care of each other.

Thank you very much.