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COVID 19 & the space sector activity - Polish perspective

Honorable delegates, honorable colleagues, ladies and gentlemen,

First and foremost, I would like to extend my gratitude to the Norwegian Space Group for being our host during the two EISC conferences in 2020 and 2021. We highly appreciate the fact that our colleagues in the Stortinget Ms. Åsunn Lyngedal and Mr Kårstein Eidem Løvaas agreed to take over the Presidency during the pandemic and were able to organize very interesting plenary sessions. Additionally, I would like to thank the secretariat in the ESPI Institute, especially Mathieu Bataille, for an excellent organization.

Last year Polish space sector continued developing its innovative branches of industrial activity. Many MSE's were involved in application of space solutions on the emerging Polish space market.

The Polish document "Polish Space Strategy" formulated in 2017 notes that since Poland's accession to the European Space Agency, dynamic growth in Polish space industry is needed. The document specified different directions of intervention needed to increase the significance of the space sector in domestic economy. There is an increase in competitiveness of the Polish space sector and its share in the European space sector turnover by:

- intensifying Poland's participation in ESA's optional programmes;
- increasing the participation in EU space programmes - Horizon 2020, Copernicus, Galileo, SST (Space Surveillance and Tracking), GovSatCom;
- identifying the most promising technological areas for the Polish space sector;
- developing bilateral cooperation;
- increasing participation in other international initiatives;

Thanks to implementation of contracts commissioned by ESA or EUMETSAT and participation in European Union space programmes, the Polish space sector

makes use of this mechanism to accelerate its development, including an increase in export.

Another important element is the development and implementation of National Space Programme, as complement to this international activity. Last year Polish Space Agency worked on shaping this program according to the national needs with respect to Polish entities involvement in:

- European Union EUSST Consortium for satellite tracking system,
- Current ESA exploration scientific missions: ARIEL, ASIM, ATHENA, JUICE, PROBA-3,
- NASA current exploration mission: GLOWS.

The implementation of Polish Space Strategy needs to be completed by national space law regulations. Many aspects of these regulations needed to be discussed in Polish entities in recent years in the context of Poland's participating in the Legal Subcommittee of UN COPUOS. Space activity in Poland created the need for complex rules for legal aspects with respect to Polish international obligations of multilateral space Agreements, as well as internal use of outer space.

Thus, the Ministry of Economic Development, Labour and Technology in Poland is currently working on this document according to the Recommendation of Guidelines for the Long – Term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities, accepted by the United Nations in June 2019.

Poland participated actively in creation of the Arctic Council in 1996 and became an observer in the AC during the Ministerial Meeting in Ottawa in 1998. This status was a consequence of Poland's longstanding interest in the Arctic region, since regaining its independence and becoming part to the Svalbard Treaty of 1920. Poland's involvement was due to scientific interests, which is manifested *inter alia* by the establishment of permanent scientific base in Hornsund (Svalbard). Monitoring of polar ionosphere is performed at this station by Space Research Centre PAS.

With time Poland's involvement started to manifest itself more and more in political engagement, the strengthening of the role of the Observers being one of the main focuses. Taking into account Poland's growing interest in the polar regions the Council of Ministers adopted in September 2020 the strategic

document “Polish Polar Policy” that consolidates the national approach with regard to both polar regions. This document will guide our activities in the years to come including implementation of space solutions.

However the normal course of Polish space sector development was continued to be interrupted in 2020 by the COVID 19 restrictions introduced all over Europe. Poland supports recovery of EU-ESA Space Council activity, as well as the Framework Agreement of EU/ESA cooperation.

Finally, speaking about the protection of the Arctic region with all challenges and opportunities that stand before the international community, I do hope that we will be able to meet in-person during the EISC workshop organized somewhere in the Northern Norway later this year.

Thank you very much for your attention.