

**UNITED NATIONS COMMISSION ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
FOR DEVELOPMENT (CSTD), twenty-third session (virtual meeting)
Geneva, 10-12 June 2020**

**Discussion on “Exploring space technologies for sustainable development and
the benefits of international research collaboration in this context”**

Statement submitted by

Prof. Bai Chunli
President of the Chinese Academy of Sciences

DISCLAIMER: The views presented here are the contributors' and do not necessarily reflect the views and position of the United Nations or the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development.

Speech to be made by Prof. Bai Chunli at the Virtual Space Science Meeting in Switzerland

Dear Distinguished XXXX, Ladies and Gentlemen, Colleagues and Friends,

It is such a great pleasure and privilege for me to address this distinguished audience. -
The world pandemic (of the COVID-19) has made us realized more than ever before the importance of solidarity, international cooperation and the need of science and innovation in our fight against our common challenges. It has also made the world's food safety and food insecurity challenge an even more serious one due to disrupting of normal farming and food chain supply. The second wave of desert locust plagues in Africa makes the food situation there a particular a big concern.

In the current crisis, it is important for the food insecure countries to have first hand information of the world's food production, both at national and global level. However, the availability and transparency of these information is a challenge due to the paucity of their owning such monitoring and analysis system themselves. As a result, these countries have to take the risks of making decisions based on information from third party, which are either delayed or unverifiable. Therefore, it is of great importance for these countries to acquire such monitoring and analysis system of their own.

CropWatch is such a system. Developed by Prof. Wu Binfang and his team at CAS, this system allows the stakeholders across the world to carry out independent monitoring and analysis of agro-information and crop production for their own interest with the application of remote sensing data.

CropWatch has long been used as an important tool in the Chinese decision-makings on the food market, annual planning of food import/export and disaster relieves. In the past few months, CropWatch has issued three news letters and 2 bulletins, providing agro-information for both China and the world with a particular goal to address the impact of the outbreak of the COVID-19 and desert locust in Africa.

CropWatch can be tailored to meet the needs of different countries. For example, it was customized for Mozambique in partnership with the country's agro-ministry. Today it is used by Mozambique to monitor the whole country and each province. This case well demonstrates how a country could benefit from the latest technology and took a leapfrog to acquiring such independent monitoring and analysis system without investment in data storage and computing power.

Today I am very pleased to announce we are offering this Earth Observation for Food Security Program to you---- the countries that need it under the joint partnership between UNCSTD and the Alliance of International Science Organizations, ANSO in brief. The means of passing on the system include activities such as training, technique transfer, customization and localization. If it goes well, we may extend our efforts to other S&T domains relevant to SDGs under this same cooperation scheme.

ANSO is a newly established International Science Organization founded two years ago with the goal to promote and advance the UN SDGs with concrete S&T actions. As President of

ANSO, I am proud to say that ANSO will develop more solid cooperation mechanisms with international organizations such as UNESCO to address our common challenges.

Before concluding, please allow me to say that the Chinese Academy of Sciences has contributed its part in the global fight against COVID-19 through the research and development of fast testing kits, anti-virus drugs, vaccines and antibodies, and development and sharing of the related big data and information.

I am sure with solidarity and close international cooperation we mankind will overcome the current challenges and others ahead of us.

Thank you so much.