



ASG Talking Points – EUMETSAT UFA Opening Ceremony

Greetings:

His.E. Vincent Biruta, Minister of Natural Resources of the Republic of Rwanda

His.E. Hassan Adoum Bakhit Hagggar, Commissioner for Infrastructure and Sustainable Development, Central African Economic and Monetary Community (CEMAC)

Her.E. Marie Thérèse Chantal Mfoula, Assistant Secretary General of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS)

Mr. Alain Ratier, Director-General of EUMETSAT

Dr. Josue Dione, Senior Advisor to the Commissioner for Rural Economy and Agriculture of the African Union Commission (AUC)

Mr Michael Ryan, the Representative of the European Union Delegation to Rwanda

Your excellencies, Dear Representatives of International and Regional organizations and partners, Dear Permanent Representatives of Member States to the World Meteorological Organization.

All the participants, ladies and gentleman, good morning:

- On behalf of the WMO Secretary General, Petteri Taalas, I would like to congratulate the opening of the 12th EUMETSAT User Forum in Africa. Taking this opportunity I would like delivery a few thank yous:
 - First thank you go to the EUMETSAT, through the DG of EUMETSAT, Mr. Alain Ratier for organizing the important and timely user forum. There is a long history of close collaboration between WMO and EUMETSAT to help improve the provision more accurate weather and climate services for Africa – a collaboration that we value very much. WMO appreciated greatly that the European nations that have joined forces in EUMETSAT **for providing comprehensive support to WMO Regional activities, developing and the LDCs, in particular Africa, with** a strategic objectives and clear roadmap and, in doing so, combine your efforts with the European Union, the African Union and the World Meteorological Organization. A number of projects, initiatives and activities have already taken place in African region, including the EUMETSAT User Forum in Africa, who met for the first time in Niger in April 1995, and now as a long-standing commitment of EUMETSAT. Along the more than 20 years, it has proven to be a model of dialogue between satellite providers and satellite users, between the 30 EUMETSAT Member States and the 56 WMO Members of Africa.
- Secondly, WMO thanks greatly the Government of Rwanda, through **His.E. Vincent Biruta**, Minister of Natural Resources of the Republic of Rwanda, for hosting this User Forum in this beautiful capital city Kigali. WMO realized that the Forum is also a convener of relevant stakeholders in matters related to earth observations, its applications and its policy implications. These stakeholders, such as the African Union Commission, the European

Union, the African Ministerial Conference on Meteorology (AMCOMET) whose presence here today show the importance they are giving to this event.

- Thirdly WMO thanks all the participants, especially African Users, for actively participating this user forum. The User Forums continues to be one of the key platforms in Africa that facilitate the use of satellite data throughout the continent, in particular, for the National Meteorological and Hydrological Services. In 2012 at 15th CBS session, a CBS resolution was approved for user readiness for new generation of GEO Meteorological satellites. We all aware that the constellation of meteorological satellites, particularly of geostationary satellites, is undergoing rapid changes from 2014 to 2020. An entire new generation of systems, including Meteosat Third Generation (MTG) will become operational, posing great opportunities but also significant challenges to many users. WMO, through our space programme and Education and training programme activities, jointly with EUMETSAT and other satellite operators, has made great efforts for supporting the satellite utilizations, including but not limited to, the Virtual Laboratory for Education and Training in Satellite Meteorology (VLab), the registration of EUMETSAT datasets in the WMO Information System (WIS), the WMO Consultative Meetings on High-level Policy on Satellite Matters with study outcomes of Socio-economic benefits of meteorological satellites, and the WMO Satellite User Readiness Navigator (SATURN) project, just name a few. In this regard, I strongly encourage all WMO Members and users, to sensitize the potential challenges with the new generation of satellites, and to make greater efforts, even some institutional arrangements for applications in weather, climate and environmental areas, for ensuring the greater benefits from this new generation of satellites for the sustainable development of our nations.
- To this effect, it is critical that we all build on these existing partnerships and explore the landscape in terms of new partners in support for a coherent and structured capacity building effort in Africa, a key component to ensure the sustainability of the investments we are all making today.
- With these remarks, I would wish you all fruitful deliberations in the coming days and I am looking forward to see the outcomes of this Forum as well as recommendations.
- Please rest assured that WMO will continue to support this user forum (platform).
- Thank you, for your attention, merci.