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Madam **Chair**, fellow parliamentarians and **space**-friends.

On behalf of the **Norwegian** delegation, I **thank** you for hosting this event, and I am **pleased** to say some words about areas where Norway has a **special** interest and competence when it comes to space and space cooperation.

Estonia has put space and entrepreneurship on **top** of the agenda for this year's Chairmanship. Space and entrepreneurship is also an important topic for **Norway**.

The Norwegian space industry consists today of around 40 businesses, big and small, with a yearly turnover of 7 billion Norwegian kroner, which is about 800 million Euros.

Norway has a **natural** advantage when it comes to downloading of data because of our **geography**.

Located in the **extreme** north we have Svalbard Satellite Station (SvalSat) **This** station in Svalbard is today the world's **largest** commercial ground station with 31 antennas.

Svalbard is the **main** ground station for downlink of European weather data, and is a part of the core ground segment for downlink of Copernicus data.

Svalbard Satellite Station (SvalSat) is a part of Kongsberg Satellite Services, which is located in **my** arctic hometown Tromsø, **downloading** satellite data. KSAT provides **time** critical monitoring services for **environment**, climate and

safety; oil spill monitoring covering **all** installations on the Norwegian shelf. Vessel monitoring both for identification of **sources**, fisheries monitoring and **border** control.

Further south, but **still** north of the Arctic Circle, we have Andøya space Center which is an **ideal** place for launching of **small** satellites. Andøya Space Center has over **50** years of experience launching rockets and has favorable geographical conditions for launching of **small** satellites.

Madam Chair,

With the **decreasing** ice and warming of the ocean, the fish stocks are swimming further **north** and the fishing vessels follows. The number of cruise ships and cargo vessels are **also** following the retreating ice.

To monitor the **activity**, to provide **good** communication, safety for the environment and **security** for the people, we **depend** upon on satellites.

Today the satellite coverage for communication is getting progressively worse **north** of 72 degrees, just north of mainland Norway.

The last years we have had fishing vessels operating **north** of Svalbard at 81 degrees. Satellite coverage in the Northern areas is of **paramount** importance for Norway.

So on behalf of the Norwegian delegation I just have to say that we are here as **new** members of a **newly** elected parliament. We are here to **learn** and to take an **active** part in the cooperation.

Thank you so much for your attention!