



STATEMENT OF THE G-77 AND CHINA DURING THE FIFTY-EIGHT SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS COMMITTEE ON THE PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE, 10 - 19 JUNE 2015, DELIVERED BY H.E. AMBASSADOR ARMIN ANDEREYA, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF CHILE

**Agenda Item 4: GENERAL EXCHANGE OF VIEWS**

Mr. Chairman,

1. On behalf of the Group of 77 and China, I would like to express our satisfaction Mr. Azzedine Oussedik for your successful Chairmanship of the 57th session of COPUOS last year and assure you of our full support for the present session. The Group would also like to extend its appreciation to the Director of the Office for Outer Space Affairs, Ms. Simonetta Di Pippo, and her dedicated staff for the documentation and planning required for convening this meeting.

Mr. Chairman,

2. During the last fifty eight years, COPUOS has acted as a bridge that has brought the advantages and benefits of space research and technology to countries that are struggling to overcome social and economic difficulties. In this regard, the Group of 77 and China would like to seize this opportunity to express its highest appreciation for the work that COPUOS and its two Subcommittees have carried out in promoting international cooperation on the peaceful uses of outer space through the elaboration of treaties governing outer space activities and offering an adequate framework to address matters that have great impact on the development of nations.

3. In recent years the Committee has witnessed the growing interest and engagement of developing countries in Space Activities and in the discussions of COPUOS. Several Member States of the G-77 and China have achieved important milestones in space activities; while others are just beginning to incorporate space activities into their national programmes. This fact shows that all members of the Group have an increasing awareness of the potential, importance and impact that space activities have today. In this context, the Group is of the view that all forums where space related issues are addressed should be enhanced and strengthened in order to guaranty that all countries can engage in these activities on a basis of equality.

4. The Group considers that international cooperation on space activities should be enhanced and expanded in order to promote all aspects of the peaceful utilization of outer space and to improve the on-going and future activities in this area with a view to contributing to both the global social and economic prosperity and sustainable development, particularly for developing countries.

5. At the outset, the Group of 77 and China wishes to recall the founding principle that the exploration of outer space on a basis of equality and according to the principle of the non-appropriation of outer space including the moon and other celestial bodies and the peaceful use of outer space, as stated in the Treaty on Principles Governing the activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies, in order to ensure the common benefits of space activities.

Mr. Chairman,

6. Several of the issues to be discussed during this session are of paramount importance to developing countries. Protection of the environment, technology transfer, capacity building, sustainable development, prevention and mitigation of natural disasters, among others, are aspects that need to be strengthened through international cooperation in space activities.

7. Outer space plays an increasing and important role in the social and economic development of all nations. Activities in outer space in the last decades have increased dramatically with the emergence of new actors from governmental and non-governmental entities from all around the world. Therefore outer space resources should be protected and be used rationally for the benefit of the whole of humankind. Sustainable use of space can only be ensured if all activities in this environment are carried out according to the relevant international legal framework and regulations.

8. The proliferation of space debris and the increasing possibilities of collisions and interference raise concerns about the long-term sustainability of space activities, particularly in the low-Earth orbit and geostationary orbit environments. The Group of 77 and China therefore underscores the important work and progress achieved by the Working Group on the Long-Term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities, in the Scientific and Technical subcommittee, under the chairmanship of Mr. Peter Martinez of South Africa. We are looking forward to considering and examining the draft report of the Working Group as well as the updated version of the set of draft guidelines, based on the work conducted by the Working Group during the fifty-second session of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee. The Group is of the view that these documents will contribute to make space activities safer and sustainable for all space stakeholders and simultaneously ensure that all countries are able to have equitable access of outer space.

9. In this context, the Group considers that the Committee should play an active role in strengthening the interaction between the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee and the Legal Subcommittee in order to ensure that scientific and technical advances in space activities are properly addressed by means of the necessary legal framework. Coordination and synergies between the two Subcommittees would also promote understanding, further adherence and compliance with existing United Nations legal instruments.

Mr. Chairman,

10. COPUOS and its two subcommittees constitute the adequate mechanism to address space related issues. We must recall that people worldwide rely on the UN system to address global needs and specially the needs of the developing countries. It is the expectation of the Group that we will be able to address these issues in a spirit of cooperation and consensus and to come up with conclusions and recommendations which will contribute to global prosperity through the promotion of enhanced international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space.

11. The Group is of the view that the Committee should be enhanced and strengthened through a stronger and wider participation of its Member States, as well as the contributions of its observer organizations.

12. The Group is prepared to engage in the discussions that are about to take place during this session of the Committee and will express its views under specific agenda items.

Thank you.

#### **Agenda item 6: REPORT OF THE SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL SUBCOMMITTEE ON ITS FIFTY SECOND SESSION**

1. The Group of 77 and China would like to thank the Secretariat for the preparations of this agenda item and would also like to share its views with the Committee on this topic.

2. Regarding the physical nature and technical attributes of the Geostationary Orbit and its utilization and applications, the Group wishes to underscore that this is a limited resource which has great potential for the implementation of a wide array of programs to benefit not only our countries but the global community as well. The G-77 and China is concerned by the risk of saturation that threatens the sustainability of space activities in this environment. The utilization of this orbit spectrum must be rational and accessible to all

States in equitable conditions taking into account the needs and interests of developing countries in compliance with the established principles in the normative framework and the decisions made by both the ITU and other relevant bodies of the UN system.

3. With regard to the issue of the Long-term sustainability of outer space activities, the Group looks forward to the examination of the report and the set of draft guidelines of the Working Group on the Long-term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities. The G-77 and China is of the view that the outcome of this Working Group should avoid any measures that would limit or hamper access to space by nations with emerging space capabilities.

4. The international legal framework should be further developed to address the concerns of all States and refrain from setting up overly high standards or thresholds for space activities in a way that may hinder the development of the space capacities of developing countries. In this regard, the Group emphasizes the need to devote more efforts for technical-scientific and legal capacity building and make the required expertise available to developing countries.

5. We also consider that remote sensing and other facets of space science and technology have numerous applications in the areas of water resources, oceanography and the environment. Capacity building in this area can prepare the relevant actors of our nations to take preventive action for environmental degradation and related hazards; improve agricultural planning and to measure and forecast drought and desertification, just to mention a few examples.

6. Similarly, satellite-based systems can be used for tele-education, tele-medicine, family welfare, communications and emergencies in remote areas. In this regard, the training of scientists and staff in developing countries is crucial as well as develop mechanisms that facilitate the free flow of scientific information and data exchange. Moreover, the G-77 and China supports initiatives which promote the diffusion and availability of space-based data to developing countries at no cost, in order to provide direct returns to society in terms of products, services and diffusion of knowledge.

7. Natural disasters are a matter of great concern to all Countries. The last years have proven to be a challenge to many countries due to earthquakes and floods affecting several regions of the planet and taking the lives of hundreds of thousand persons. Therefore, the Group believes that more efforts should be devoted to strengthening the strategy for the use of space technology in the area of disaster management and support.

8. In this regard, the Group follows the activities carried out within the framework of UN-SPIDER, including the support provided through the programme to the emergency efforts made in response to major disasters worldwide.

9. The transfer of technology needs to be promoted through capacity building and by making technology accessible. Therefore, the Group of 77 and China calls upon OOSA and its Member States for greater support to the training programs of the regional centers affiliated to the United Nations, and to conduct widest exchange and cooperation among different regional centers, with the aim of enhancing North-South and South-South cooperation to facilitate the transfer of technology among nations.

10. The Group of 77 and China also calls upon OOSA and Member States to make available more opportunities for greater academic linkages, long term fellowships and further collaboration with National and Regional Laboratories, UN Centers of research and other national and international institutions on space matters with institutions in developing countries.

11. The G-77 and China would like to refer to the use of nuclear power sources in outer space, specifically in the geo-stationary orbit and low-Earth atmosphere. More consideration should be given to this issue in order to address the problem of potential collisions of nuclear powered space objects in orbit and the

incidents or emergencies that may be caused by the accidental reentry of such an object in the Earth's atmosphere and impact on its surface, and the consequences of such an event to the health and life of people and the ecosystem. The Group considers that increased attention should be given to these issues through adequate strategies, long term planning and regulations, including the Safety Framework for Nuclear Power Sources Applications in Outer Space.

12. Regarding Space Debris, the Group is of the view that the future of space activities largely depends not only on preventing measures but especially on mitigation and its removal. This topic should continue to be treated as a priority with the view to further increase research in the areas of technology for space debris observation, space debris environmental modeling and technologies to protect space systems from space debris and to limit the creation of additional space debris.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

### **Agenda Item 7: REPORT OF THE LEGAL SUBCOMMITTEE ON ITS FIFTY – FOURTH SESSION**

1. The Group of 77 and China would like to thank the Secretariat for the preparations of this agenda item and would also like to share its views with the Committee on this agenda item.
2. Since the establishment of COPUOS, more than half a century ago, space activities and technology have developed tremendously and are becoming more complex. While many achievements have been reached, many legal issues regarding space activities remain unresolved.
3. As the interest of the private sector in the commercial use of outer space and space bodies, the Group feels that COPUOS and its Subcommittees should address the issue of commercial exploration in outer space. If states are allowed to develop their own internal regulations before a multilateral agreement on the matter is discussed, this may lead to legal uncertainties.
3. Despite lengthy debates, no consensus to date has been reached on the subject of the definition and delimitation of outer space. The Group of 77 and China is of the view that further discussions on this matter will help to address clarity in the implementation of outer space law and airspace law, taking in consideration that space law is the only branch of international law that has no limited and defined area of application. With the aim of reaching an agreement on this matter, the Group encourages the Committee to reinvigorate its efforts on this issue and stands ready to continue participating constructively in substantive discussions.
4. The Group of 77 and China would also like to convey its deep appreciation to the Chairman of the Working Group on Definition and Delimitation of Outer Space, Professor Jose Monserrat Filho of Brazil, for the outstanding work he has done in facilitating discussion in order to reach consensus among member states on this issue.
5. The Group of 77 and China considers that more effective and proactive efforts are needed in order to increase awareness on the importance of space law and the legal framework in carrying out space activities and programs. Capacity building in space law needs to be enhanced through international cooperation. Therefore, the Group calls for greater support by OOSA and Member States to enhance cooperation of both North-South and South-South to facilitate the sharing of knowledge related to space law among nations.
6. The Group of 77 and China also calls upon OOSA and Member States to make available more opportunities for greater academic linkages, long term fellowships and further collaboration with universities, UN Centers of research and other national and international institutions on space law with institutions in developing countries.

7. The Group would like to highlight the activities organized by the Office of Outer Space Affairs in cooperation with host countries aimed at enhancing the capacity building in space law. The work carried out by UNOOSA with space law educators and representatives of the regional centers for space science and technology education, affiliated to the United Nations, should further focus on the development of the curriculum on space law. In this regard, we would like to highlight the Workshop on Space Law, held in Beijing, China from 17 to 21 November 2014. The Group welcomes the contributions by Beihang Center of China, on training and study programs on Space Law. The IAA-IISL International Conference on Climate Change and Disaster Management, was held at Kovalam, Thiruvananthapuram, during February 26-28, 2015. This Conference included two legal sessions namely, 'The Legal aspects of Climate Change and Disaster Management', and 'Legal aspects of Data Management and related aspects'.

Mr. Chairman,

8. The geostationary orbit is a limited resource which has great potential for the implementation of a wide array of programs to benefit not only our countries but the global community as well. The Group of 77 and China is concerned by the risk of saturation that threatens the sustainability of space activities in this environment. The utilization of this orbit spectrum must be rationalized and extended to all States in equitable conditions taking into account the needs and interests of developing countries in compliance with the established principles in the normative framework and the decisions made by both the ITU and other relevant bodies of the UN system;

9. The Group of 77 and China would like to refer to the use of nuclear power sources in outer space, specifically in the geo-stationary orbit and low-Earth atmosphere. More consideration should be given to this issue in order to address the problem of potential collisions of nuclear powered space objects in orbit and the incidents or emergencies that may be caused by the accidental reentry of such an object in the Earth's atmosphere and impact on its surface, and the consequences of such an event to the health and life of people and the ecosystem.

10. Regarding the problem of Space Debris, the Group is of the view that the future of space activities largely depends on its mitigation. It is of utmost importance that this topic continues to be treated as a priority and to carry out legal debates in order to avoid its generation and to regulate its mitigation and removal. In this connection, the Group welcomes the adoption of a new item in the agenda of the Legal Subcommittee regarding the growth of small and micro satellites activities. The Group considers that the legal subcommittee should discuss matters related to space debris and to make a positive contribution for its effective mitigation. On the other hand, the mitigation efforts should not lead to the adoption of overly high standards or threshold harmful to the development of capacities of developing countries.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.