



STATEMENT OF THE G-77 AND CHINA DURING THE FIFTY FOURTH PERIOD OF SESSIONS OF THE UNITED NATIONS COMMITTEE ON THE PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE, 1 - 10 JUNE 2011, DELIVERED BY H.E. AMBASSADOR ALI SOLTANIEH, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN

Thursday, 2nd June 2011

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 for the successful Chairmanship of the 53th session of COPUOS and assure you and the members of your bureau of our full support for this session. The Group would also like to extend its appreciation to the Director of the Office for Outer Space Affairs, Dr. Mazlan Othman, and her dedicated staff for the documentation and planning required for convening this meeting.

Mr. Chairman,

2. This year marks the 50th anniversary the first period of sessions of COPUOS and the 50th anniversary of human spaceflight activities, where the journey made by Yury Gagarin on the 12 of April of 1961 and the approximately 500 men and women that have had the privilege to reach outer space, have served as a source of inspiration for future generations to embrace space science as an activity dedicated to the wellbeing of peoples.

3. During this period, 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 G77 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 use of outer space through the elaboration of treaties governing outer space activities and offering an adequate framework to address matters that have great impact in the development of nations. The more COPUOS identifies, deeply discusses and finds solutions for the fundamental space issues of our time the more indispensable it will be.

4. In recent years the Committee has witnessed how developing countries have been engaging more in Space Activities and in the discussions of COPUOS. Several Member States of the G77 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 warranty that all countries can engage in these activities on a basis of equality.

5. The Group sees that enhancement in international cooperation in space activities should be made in order to promote all aspects of the peaceful utilization of outer space, and improve to the on-going and future activities in this area with the view to contribute to both global social and economic prosperity and sustainable development, particularly for developing countries.

6. At the outset, the Group of G77 and China wishes to recall 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 article 1, 2, 3 & 4 of 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,

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

8. 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 should be protected and used rationally as a limited natural resource. Sustainable use of space will be warranted if all activities carried out in this environment are supported by clear regulations, rules and recommendations. At the same time this new reality also shows that much work remains to be done and many subjects should be considered.

9. The proliferation of space debris and the increased 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 G77 and China therefore welcomes the establishment of the Working Group on the Long-Term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities in the Scientific and Technical subcommittee and encourages the Committee to follow the discussions in that item in order to contribute collectively to make space activities more secure for all space actors and simultaneously ensure that all countries are able to have equitable access of outer space.

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

11. In this regard, the time allocated to the Legal Subcommittee should be rationalized and optimized. This should be achieved through the inclusion of substantive discussions and items, with the objective of strengthening the progressive development of the international legal framework of space activities. Therefore, the current duration of two weeks of the Legal Subcommittee should be retained to ensure that future legal aspects of the international legal framework can be addressed properly.

Mr. Chairman,

12. We have indeed an adequate mechanism before us in COPUOS and its two subcommittees to address space related issues. We must recall that people worldwide count on the UN system to address global needs and specially the needs of the developing countries. In a spirit of cooperation and consensus, it is the hope of the Group that we will be able to address these issues 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.

13. 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.

Monday, 6th June 2011

Agenda item 7: REPORT OF THE SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL SUBCOMMITTEE ON ITS FORTY EIGHTH 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 item.
2. The Group of G77 and China is of the view that the outcome of the discussion under the Working Group on the long term sustainability of outer space activities should avoid any measures that would limit access to space by nations with emerging space capabilities. International legal framework should be further developed to address concerns of all States, to refrain from setting up overly high standards or thresholds for space activities in a way that may hinder the enhancement of capacity building 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.
3. Remote sensing and other aspects 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 peoples 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.
4. Similarly, satellite-based systems can be used for tele-education, tele-medicine, family welfare, communications and emergencies in remote areas. In this regard, training of scientists and staff in developing countries is crucial as well as the need for a free flow of scientific information and data exchange.
5. Natural disasters are a matter of great concern to all States. The last few years have proven to be a real challenge to many countries, due to earthquakes and floods affecting several regions of the planet and taking the lives of hundreds of thousand peoples. Therefore, the Group believes that more efforts should be devoted to strengthen the strategy for the use of space technology in the area of disaster management and support.
6. 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. The Group welcomes the signing of new cooperation agreements for the establishment of regional support offices in developing countries with the view to provide space based information to support relief effort. The Group notes with appreciation that the UN-SPIDER Beijing office has recently started its activities and believes that it will play an important role in the field of disaster management.
7. Transfer of technology needs to be promoted through capacity building and accessibility to technology. Therefore, the Group of 77 and China calls OOSA and Member States for greater support to enhance cooperation of both North-South and South-South to facilitate the transfer of technology among nations.
8. 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 Centres of research and other national and international institutions on space matters with institutions in developing countries.
9. Events relating to space weather are of common concern. Understanding the impacts of solar activity on the Earth's climate, other planets and interstellar space is of importance for space activities. International cooperation in space weather, particularly through the International Space Weather Initiative, provides Member States with the opportunity to coordinate global monitoring of space weather, to promote essential forecast capabilities and further international space research.
10. The geostationary orbit is a limited resource which has great potential for the implementation of a wide

array of programs to benefit our countries. 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 conditions of equality taking into account the needs and interests of developing countries and the geographical location of certain 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; giving priority to the contributions of space activities to sustainable development and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

11. 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 an accidental reentry in the Earth's atmosphere and impact on its surface by these objects, and their consequences on health and life of people and the ecosystem.

12. 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.

13. Regarding Space Debris, the Group is of the view that the future of space activities largely depends on its mitigation. 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.

14. The Group is of the view that the Space Debris Mitigation Guideline is of the utmost importance. Further studies and research should be carried out in order to improve them and also to keep the Guidelines up to date with new techniques and capabilities of detection and reduction of space debris, in accordance to the Resolution 62/217 of the General Assembly.

Thursday, 2nd June 2011

Agenda Item 8: REPORT OF THE LEGAL SUBCOMMITTEE ON ITS FORTY - EIGHTH 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 fifty years ago, space activities and technology have developed tremendously and are becoming more complex. While many achievements have been reached many issues remain to be addressed in the legal framework of space activities.

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 G77 and China is of the view that an agreement on this matter will help to address legal clarity in the implementation of outer space law and airspace law. To this end, 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 appreciation to the Chairman of the Working Group on Definition and Delimitation of Outer Space, Jose Monserat Filho of Brazil, for the work he has done in facilitating discussion in order to reach consensus among member states on this issue.

5. The Group of G77 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, in particular in developing countries, needs to be enhanced

through international cooperation. Therefore, the Group of 77 and China 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 and regional and international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space. 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.

8. The geostationary orbit is a limited resource which has great potential for the implementation of a wide array of programs to benefit our countries. 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 conditions of equality taking into account the needs and interests of developing countries and the geographical location of certain 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; giving priority to the contributions of space activities to sustainable development and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

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 an accidental reentry in the Earth's atmosphere and impact on its surface by these objects, and their consequences on health and life of people and the ecosystem.

10. 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.

11. Regarding Space Debris, the Group is of the view that the future of space activities largely depends on its mitigation. 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.

12. The Group considers appropriate for the legal subcommittee to discuss matters related to space debris and to make a positive contribution for its effective mitigation. In this sense, the mitigation efforts should not lead to the adoption of overly high standards or threshold harmful to the enhancement of capacity building of developing countries.

13. The Group is of the view that the Space Debris Mitigation Guideline is of the utmost importance. Further studies and research should be carried out in order to improve them and also to keep the Guidelines up to date with new techniques and capabilities of detection and reduction of space debris, in accordance to the Resolution 62/217 of the General Assembly.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.