



**Statement of the G-77 and China during the sixty-second session of the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, 12-21 June 2019, delivered by H.E. Ambassador Omar Amer Youssef, Permanent Representative of Egypt**

**Agenda Item 4: General exchange of views**

Mr. Chairman,

1. We are delighted to see a member of the G-77 and China chairing the 62<sup>nd</sup> Session of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS). The Group assures you of its full cooperation and support in discharge of your responsibilities.
2. The Group further takes the opportunity to thank the Director of the Office for Outer Space Affairs, Ms. Simonetta Di Pippo, for her opening remarks, and the Secretariat for the excellent preparations made for this session.
3. The Group welcomes the application submitted by two states, Rwanda and Singapore, to become full members of the Committee. The steady growth of COPUOS in recent years is a clear sign of the international recognition of the unique role of COPUOS. In this regard, the Group both welcomes and encourages the participation of observers in the Committee and its Subcommittees as this contributes to greater engagement with the activities of COPUOS. It is important that more Member States of the United Nations be welcomed as this contributes to the promotion of the peaceful uses of outer space.
4. The Group of 77 and China underscores its firm conviction that the use and exploration of the outer space shall be carried out exclusively for peaceful purposes, with the view to realizing a shared vision for the future, for the benefit and in the interests of all countries, irrespective of their degree of economic or scientific development, and in conformity with applicable international law.
5. Universal and equal access to outer space for all countries without discrimination, regardless of their level of scientific, technical and economic development as well as the equitable and rational use of the outer space for the benefit and in the interests of all humankind, the principle of non-appropriation of outer space, including the moon and other celestial bodies by any means, international cooperation in the development of space activities especially those referred to in the Declaration on International Cooperation in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space for the benefit and in the interest of all States taking in particular account the needs on developing countries, are the most important principles that should govern the activities of States in outer space.

Mr. Chairman,

6. The Group reaffirms the importance of preventing an arms race in outer space and placement of weapons of any kind in outer space and calls upon all States, in particular those with major space capabilities, to contribute actively to the peaceful use of outer space to prevent an arms race there and to refrain from placing weapons of any kind in outer space and any other actions contrary to that objective. The Group believes that the preservation of the outer space environment in the long-term requires a commitment of international community to ensure that no weapons will ever be placed there.

7. Developing countries are increasingly engaged in space activities and actively participating in the discussions of the Committee. While several Member States of this Group have achieved important milestones in space activities, others are starting to develop their own space programmes and policies. This fact affirms our recognition of the potential, importance and impact of space activities.

8. In this connection, it is imperative to intensify the efforts to extend to all States the benefits derived from outer space activities with a view to promoting the contribution of peaceful uses of outer space to socio-economic development. In line with the enhancement of international cooperation in outer space activities, it is vital to promote a wider participation of developing countries through active assistance by advanced space-faring nations and the Office of Outer Space Affairs. To this end, capacity building and technical assistance are key factors in the expansion of the abilities of those working in the field, allowing them to gain expertise and knowledge from more advanced spacefaring nations.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

## **Agenda Item 6: Report of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee on its fifty-sixth session**

Mr. Chairman,

1. The Group of 77 and China would like to comment on some of the issues put forth during the last session of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee and that we consider of utmost relevance for developing countries.

2. The unfavorable financial situation of the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs, has limited its capacity-building activities. UNOOSA is affected by a shortage of funds to support cooperation programs. Nevertheless, the Group would like to note with appreciation activities carried out in 2018, under the Programme on Space Applications by the UNOOSA in collaboration with Member States and other international organizations.

3. With regard to the technical attributes of the geostationary orbit and its utilization and applications, the Group would like to reiterate the fact that the geostationary orbit, a limited natural resource clearly in danger of saturation, needs to be used in a way that ensures countries have equitable access to those orbits and frequencies, taking into account the special needs of the developing countries and the geographical situation of particular countries.

4. The issue of space debris, its proliferation and removal, continue to be a cause for concern in the space. The Group therefore is of the view that the potential hazards posed by the collision of debris with space objects and the consequences of the contamination of outer space cannot be underestimated. It is also important that new space actors are not burdened due to the historical activities of established space actors. The Group would also like to emphasize the challenges caused by placement of large and mega constellations in space and believes addressing these challenges should be a priority in the work of COPUOS.

Mr. Chairman,

5. Space science and technology, and their applications are essential in effectively addressing current and future challenges to social and economic development and sustainability, such as natural disasters, food security, climate change and natural resource security. The Group notes in this regard that space activities are also crucial to realizing the Sustainable Development Goals, in particular as part of efforts to support sustainable economic growth, improve quality of life and manage the global environment. It is therefore important to ensure that the Office is equipped with the necessary resources to assist a greater number of countries in having access to the benefits of space science and technology and its applications in line with the spirit of the Outer Space Treaty.

6. The Group would like to highlight the importance of technology transfer in bridging the space divide. The Group therefore calls upon the Committee and UNOOSA for greater support to the training programs of the regional centers affiliated to the United Nations, and to conduct wider exchange and cooperation among different regional centers, including through alliance of regional centers, with the aim of enhancing North-South and South-South cooperation to

facilitate the transfer of technology among nations. The Group also calls upon UNOOSA and Member States to make available more opportunities for academic linkages, long-term fellowships and collaboration with national and regional institutions in the field of outer space especially in developing countries.

Thank you Mr. Chairman,

## **Agenda Item 7: Report of the Legal Subcommittee on its fifty-eighth session**

Mr. Chairman,

1. The Group of 77 and China would like to comment on some issues discussed during the last session of the Legal Subcommittee which the Group deems of utmost relevance for developing countries.

2. The Group underscores once again that the definition and delimitation of outer space is a very important topic that should be kept on the agenda of this Subcommittee and that more work should be done in order to establish the legal regime applicable to airspace and outer space. In this regard, we commend all the efforts made by the Chair of the Working on Definition and delimitation of Outer Space and encourage all delegations to contribute to the discussion in a constructive manner.

3. Regarding the issue of geostationary orbit, the Group would like to reiterate that such a domain shall not be subject to national appropriation by claim of sovereignty, by means of use, repeated use or occupation, or by any other means, and that its utilization is governed by applicable international law. Furthermore, we reiterate that this orbit needs to be used rationally, efficiently and economically, in conformity with the provision of the relevant regulations, so that countries or groups of countries may have equitable access to those orbits and frequencies, taking into account the special needs of the developing countries and the geographical situation of particular countries.

4. The Group considers that capacity building in space law is a fundamental tool that should be enhanced through international cooperation. Therefore, the Group calls for a greater support by UNOOSA and Member States to foster both North-South and South-South cooperation to facilitate the sharing of knowledge and expertise in the field of international space law.

Mr. Chairman,

5. The Group believes that the ‘Declaration on International Cooperation in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space for the Benefit and in the Interest of All States, Taking into Particular Account the Needs of Developing Countries’ is important as it further promotes international cooperation in a bid to maximize the benefits in the utilization of space applications for all States and calls on all space-faring nations to contribute to promoting and fostering international cooperation on an equitable basis. It also underscores that particular attention be given to the interests of developing countries and that the Committee should be strengthened in its role as the main platform for the exchange of information in the field of international cooperation in the exploration and use of outer space.

6. Considering the essential roles of space objects, regardless of their size, in the socio-economic development of the Member States, the Group is of the view that the Committee and its Subcommittees should not create an ad-hoc legal regime or any other mechanisms, which

might impose limitations on designing, building, launching and using of space objects. The Group is of the view that in general, all international rights and obligations of the States with respect to satellites regardless of their perceived sizes are equally relevant for the conduct of space activities with the use of small satellites.

7. The Group also welcomes the decision by the Committee to maintain within the agenda item of the Legal Sub-Committee, issues related to potential legal models for exploration, exploitation and utilization of space resources. The Group is also in favor of the establishment of a Working Group on this issue as initially proposed by Greece and Belgium, and in this regard rejects any assertion that such an initiative would be premature. Instead, the LSC should seize the opportunity to foster a structured discussion of this matter.

8. The Group is of the view that in light of the increasing participation of the private sector in space activities, the negotiation of an international legally binding instrument that clearly defines and guides commercial activities in outer space could play an important role in expanding the use of outer space and stimulate space activities for the benefit of humanity. The Group considers that, besides the need for a broad debate about the implications of these activities, the developing countries shall not be excluded from the benefits of space exploration and their rights shall be considered in the discussion.

Thank you Mr. Chairman,

### **Agenda Item 13: Future role of the Committee**

Mr. Chairman,

1. The Group of 77 and China is of the view that the governance and method of work of the Committee can be improved. In this line we welcome the multi-year workplan that was approved in our previous session and the work that has been done so far this year in both subcommittees. The Group considers that the Summary of proposals on the governance method of the work of the Committee and its subsidiary bodies included in the Appendix of document A/AC.105/1202 is a good basis for our discussions.

a. Regarding the organization of work we support all the proposed elements, as they allow for better planning of the meetings and take into consideration the needs and special requirements of small delegations, which is very common for developing countries.

b. We support the possibility to upload statements, on a voluntary basis, and to reduce the time allotted to State Members and observers.

c. While appreciating the value of technical presentations, we understand that they are an addition to our discussions and considerations, and in this regard, support measures that optimize the use of plenary time for agenda items and Working Groups. The experience during 2018 of holding technical presentations during lunch time was successful and could be adopted as a general practice.

d. We support the already implemented proposal of utilizing time management devices.

e. Regarding document management we appreciate any mechanism that would allow delegations to choose electronic distribution over physical documents. This can both reduce costs of the organization and avoid unnecessary waste of resources.

f. Regarding the agenda, the Group is of the view that following the items in order could facilitate the participation of small delegations, as it provides and increased predictability of the discussions. In the same line, having clear indications within the annotated agenda of those items that require decisions would give a better environment for delegations to be prepared to engage in the decision making process.

g. We understand the value of the work that can be achieved within Working Groups, and support measures that allow them to have sufficient time for their considerations as well as predictability on when they will take place.

Thank you Mr. Chairman

## **Agenda Item 15: “Space2030” Agenda, Technical presentations**

Mr. Chairman,

1. The Group would like to thank the Bureau of the Working Group and the Secretariat for the proposal on a zero draft of the Agenda and implementation plan and assures the members of the bureau of our full cooperation in carrying out your mandate.
2. The Group of 77 and China is of the view that the “Space2030 Agenda and its Implementation Plan” should be forward looking in its objectives and imperatives and provide a more comprehensive and inclusive vision for space science and technology and their applications as key drivers for sustainable development.
3. The Group is of the view that the Space 2030 Agenda should also promote a greater understanding of the importance of space activities to life on earth and, in this regard reaffirm the unique role of UNOOSA as a facilitator of international cooperation.
4. The Group also firmly believes that the Agenda should reflect the determination to address inequalities among countries and to create conditions for the sustainable and inclusive development of space activities in support of the SDGs. In doing so, the Agenda should also identify concrete steps and measures aimed at addressing the space divide or gap between those nations that have developed space-related capabilities and technologies and those that have limited or no access to such capabilities.
5. The Group also believes that the Agenda should be implemented in consistency with the rights and obligations of states under applicable international law. At the same time, the Agenda should strongly urge states to refrain from promulgating, adopting and applying any unilateral economic, financial or trade measures that could impede the space activities and full implementation of the Agenda’s provisions, particularly in developing countries.
6. The Agenda should also incorporate the means required for its implementation and recognize the need for the mobilization of financial resources, capacity-building and the transfer of technologies to developing countries on favorable terms, and non-discriminatory basis. Thus, the objective and scope of the Agenda require a revitalized global partnership to ensure its implementation.

I thank you Mr. Chairman,