



**Statement of the G-77 and China
during the sixty-seventh session of the United Nations
Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space,
19-28 June 2024,
delivered by H.E. Laura Gil,
Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Colombia**

AGENDA ITEM 5: GENERAL EXCHANGE OF VIEWS

Mr. Chair,

1. On behalf of the Group of 77 and China, I would like to congratulate you, Mr. Sherif Mohamed Sedky of Egypt, a member of the Group, on your election as the Chair of the 67th Session of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS). I also congratulate your new Bureau, which also includes other members of the Group, Ambassador Juan Francisco Facetti of Paraguay as First Vice Chair and Mr. Hasan Abbas of Pakistan as the Second Vice Chair and Rapporteur. You can count on the Group for its full cooperation and support to you, Chair, and all members of the Bureau as we consider issues of utmost relevance, especially for developing countries, at this important session of the Committee.

2. The Group further takes the opportunity to thank the Director of the Office for Outer Space Affairs, Ms. Aarti Holla-Maini, and the Secretariat for the preparations made for this session.

Mr. Chair,

3. The steady growth of COPUOS in recent years is a clear sign of the international recognition of the unique role of COPUOS as the UN forum dedicated to discussing and promoting the peaceful uses of outer space. 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 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 the body of 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 of Developing Countries, are among the most important principles that should govern the activities in outer Space.

6. The Group believes that the Summit of the Future and the Pact of the Future should provide a unique opportunity to foster cooperation and coordination in outer space exploration and utilization, in particular the capacity building efforts and technical support for the benefit of all developing countries.

7. 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 placement of weapons of any kind in outer space and any other actions contrary to that objective. In this regard, the Group notes that transparency and confidence building measures could play a useful role. The Group believes that preservation of outer space for peaceful uses and its long-term sustainability requires the international community to ensure that no weapons will ever be placed there.

8. The Group is of the view that all outer space activities, including mega-constellations and their related operations, should fully respect the UN Charter, its principles including the principle of non-intervention and international law. If mega-constellations or any satellite internet company wishes to operate into a country, these operations must respect the legal requirements, landing rights of that country and the relevant legal instruments of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU).

9. The Group also urges States to refrain from promulgating, adopting and applying any unilateral economic, financial and trade measures and related actions contrary to international law and the Charter of the United Nations, mindful that they hamper or impede access to space and space activities, particularly, in developing countries.

Mr. Chair,

10. Developing countries are increasingly engaged in space activities and actively participating in the work 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 is a recognition of the potential, importance and benefit of space activities. The Group also considers it crucial that developing countries are not left behind or are unfairly treated in space exploration efforts.

11. 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, including the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals bearing in mind the outcome of the UNISPACE +50 process such as the UNGA resolution 73/6 and the “Space2030” Agenda. 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 and sustained assistance by advanced space faring nations and the Office of Outer Space Affairs free from conditionalities. To this end, capacity building, technical assistance and transfer of technology 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. The Group also underscores the importance of appropriate funding, as well as mobilization of extrabudgetary resources to enable the Office to provide valuable support for developing countries, including through UNOOSA’s capacity building Programmes.

12. The Group also welcomes the consensus on the scope, duration and the title of the agenda item related to Dark and Quiet Skies and Large Constellations, with a view to recommending the item to this Session of the Committee, for inclusion on the agenda of the Subcommittee. The Group looks forward to further positive engagement on the agenda item.

13. Finally, Mr. Chair, the Group reiterates its support to Director Holla-Maini in her efforts to lead the Office in an inclusive, transparent, effective and professional manner, while paying special attention to the needs of developing countries. In support of the implementation of the principle of equitable geographical representation, the Group requests UNOOSA to recruit more staff from developing countries. We look forward to working closely with the Director in promoting the peaceful uses of outer space for sustainable development, including in meeting the “Space 2030 Agenda” advancing international cooperation, strengthening the capacity of developing countries in utilizing space applications, and promote inclusivity and gender equality or balance, as applicable, in the space sector.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

[1] A/RES/77/121 para. 43



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**AGENDA ITEM 7: REPORT OF THE SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL
SUBCOMMITTEE ON ITS SIXTY-FIRST SESSION**

Mr. Chair,

1. The Group of 77 and China would like to express its appreciation to Ms. Ulpia-Elena Botezatu of Romania for her exemplary chairpersonship of the 61st session of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee and would like to comment on some of the issues put forth during the session that we consider of utmost relevance for developing countries.
2. 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.
3. The issue of accumulation of space debris continues to be a cause for concern in 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 harmful contamination of outer space cannot be underestimated. It is also important that new space actors are not overburdened due to the consequences of historical activities of established space actors. The Group would also like to emphasize the challenges caused by placement of mega constellations in low Earth orbit, including those related to collision risks and sustainable use of orbit and frequencies, and believes addressing these challenges should be a priority in the work of COPUOS.
4. Pending the adoption of legal mechanisms related to space debris mitigation and remediation, the Group takes note of the relevant voluntary measures such as the Space Debris Mitigation Guidelines and the Guidelines for the Long-term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities, and encourages advanced space-faring countries and other actors, especially those deploying mega-constellations, to pay due regard to their application take actions to ensure their full implementation. The Group further underscores the importance of strengthening the capacity of developing countries for the voluntary implementation of these measures.

Mr. Chair,

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 and the “Space2030” Agenda, 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, including sufficient funding, 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 and other applicable UN Treaties on Outer Space, as well as the “Space2030” Agenda.

6. The Group would like to highlight the importance of science and technology dissemination 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 empower the development of technology among nations. The Group also calls upon UNOOSA and Member States to make available more opportunities for academic networking, long-term fellowships and collaboration with national and regional institutions in the field of outer space especially in developing Countries.

7. The Group welcomes the constructive efforts made by all to achieve the adoption of the voluntary Guidelines for the Long Term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities (LTS) during the 62nd session of COPUOS. In this regard, it is important to bear in mind that this achievement was the outcome of a multi-dimensional compromise and therefore has a delicate balance. This delicate balance should be preserved in implementing the workplan regarding this subject and should also take into consideration the priorities and concerns of all Member States, in particular developing countries. The Group and its Member States remain committed to contribute constructively to the meetings of the LTS Working Group and its work.

8. The Group further encourages efforts for contributing towards space applications for the prevention and control of diseases and global health issues, bearing in mind the resolution “Space and Global Health” adopted by the UN General Assembly in its 77th session.

9. The Group, once again, welcomes the consensus on the scope, duration and the title of the agenda item related to Dark and Quiet Skies and Large Constellations, with a view to recommending the item to this Session of the Committee, for inclusion on the agenda of the Subcommittee.

10. Finally, Mr. Chair, the Group reiterates the role of COPUOS as the only mechanism to address peaceful uses of outer space. The Group of 77 and China will continue its engagement in the spirit of cooperation and consensus and hopes that we will be able to address these issues

to come up with solutions that will contribute to global prosperity and lasting peace through the promotion of international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.



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AGENDA ITEM 8: REPORT OF THE LEGAL SUBCOMMITTEE ON ITS SIXTY-THIRD SESSION

Mr. Chair,

1. The Group of 77 and China would like to express its appreciation to Mr. Santiago Ripol Carulla of Spain for his exemplary chairpersonship of the 63rd session of the Legal Subcommittee, and would like to comment on some issues, 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 Group 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 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 applicable the international space laws and 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 and technical support in space law are fundamental tools that should be enhanced through international cooperation. Therefore, the Group calls for 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 fields of international space law, space policy, space economy and space diplomacy.

Mr. Chair,

5. The Group believes that all efforts to promote international cooperation must be undertaken 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 and non-discriminatory 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 socioeconomic 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. While making reference to our previous statement on agenda item 7 of the 61st session of the STSC regarding space debris, the Group encourages launching states to provide advanced, proper, prompt and adequate notification to other states specially developing countries, located along the drop zones of falling space debris, as applicable, to ensure that they are sufficiently prepared to mitigate and respond to such incidents. It is equally important to strengthen the capacities of developing countries in detecting and responding to falling space debris.

8. The Group reiterates its support for the work of the Working Group on Legal Aspects of Space Resource Activities under its detailed workplan and methods of work. The Group underscores that the discussions of aspects of space resources and any possible outcome must be in line with the principles enshrined in the Outer Space Treaty and other relevant UN treaties, especially the principle of non-appropriation of Outer Space, including the moon and other celestial bodies. The Group is of the view that any approach for the exploration, exploitation, and utilization of space resources should be equitable, constructive, collaborative, consensual, and most of all, does not leave behind or unfairly disadvantage developing countries. The Group also believes that in order to be inclusive and transparent, these discussions should take place within formal sessions, which should be allotted sufficient time, with interpretation services in all official UN languages.

9. The Group is of the view that in light of the increasing participation and the evolving potential 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 taken into account in the discussion.

10. The Group also notes with appreciation the Office's multi-year project to develop an online registration portal to facilitate the registration of space objects, in view of the increasing number of submissions. The Group likewise supports deliberations at the Working Group on the Status and Application of the Five United Nations Treaties on Outer Space on how to enhance registration practices, especially for large and or mega constellations.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.