



**STATEMENT OF THE G-77 AND CHINA DURING THE SIXTY- SIXTH
SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS COMMITTEE ON THE
PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE, 31 MAY - 09 JUNE 2023,
DELIVERED BY H.E. AFTAB AHMAD KHOKHER, AMBASSADOR,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF PAKISTAN**

**AGENDA ITEM 6: REPORT OF THE SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL
SUBCOMMITTEE ON ITS SIXTIETH SESSION**

Mr. Chair,

1. The Group of 77 and China would like to express its appreciation to Ambassador Juan Francisco Facetti of Paraguay for his exemplary chairpersonship of the 60th 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. 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 programmes. Nevertheless, the Group would like to note with appreciation activities carried out in 2022, under the Programme on Space Applications by 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 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.

5. 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,

6. 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.

7. 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.

8. The Group welcomes the adoption of the terms of reference, methods of work and workplan of the Working Group on the Long-term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities, under the able leadership of Mr. Umamaheswaran R. from India, and looks forward to further engaging with the Working Group.

9. The Group welcomes the establishment of the Space and Global Health Platform and the Space and Global Health Network, upon the recommendation of the Working Group on Space and Global Health. The Group likewise appreciates the inclusion of “Space and global health” as a permanent agenda item of the STSC, in recognition of the role of space science and technology in various health and medical applications. In this regard, the Group welcomes the adoption of the resolution “Space and Global Health” by the United Nations General Assembly in its 77th session.

10. The Group expresses its support for the inclusion of the Protection of Dark and Quiet Skies for Science and Society on the agenda of the STSC and notes the proposal for the potential establishment of an expert group on the matter.

11. Finally, Mr. Chair, the Group welcomes the inclusion and recognition of space as a driver of sustainable development in the Ministerial Declaration adopted at the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, which was convened in July 2022 under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council at its 16th Meeting.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.