



**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 4: GENERAL EXCHANGE OF VIEWS

Mr. Chair,

1. On behalf of the Group of 77 and China, I would like to reiterate our full cooperation and support to you, Mr. Omran Sharaf, United Arab Emirates, a member of the Group, in the discharge of your responsibilities as Chair of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS).
2. The Group further takes the opportunity to thank the Acting Director of the Office for Outer Space Affairs, Mr. Niklas Hedman, for his opening remarks, and the Secretariat for the preparations made for this session.
3. The Group welcomes Guatemala and Uzbekistan as new members of the Committee [1]. 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 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.

7. 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.

8. 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. 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.

10. 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.

11. Finally, Mr. Chair, with regard to the appointment of the next Director for the Office of Outer Space Affairs, the Group is closely following the appointment process and would like to express its view that the new Director should continue to lead the Office in an inclusive, transparent, effective and professional manner, while paying special attention to the needs of developing countries. Representation from developing countries in the Office and regional balance should be guaranteed as well. We look forward to working closely with the next 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 encouraging inclusivity and gender equality and balance in the space sector.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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