

Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space
UNISPACE+50 High-Level Segment
Vienna, June 20-21, 2018

UNISPACE+50 Statement

Statement delivered by: Mr. Sylvain Laporte, President Canadian Space Agency

Madame la présidente,

Au nom du gouvernement du Canada, je tiens à vous féliciter pour votre élection à ce poste très important. Sous votre direction compétente, nous sommes convaincus qu'UNISPACE + 50 sera un succès retentissant. Soyez assuré de l'appui indéfectible du Canada et de notre engagement à atteindre les nobles objectifs dont nous sommes saisis, notamment l'élaboration d'un programme pour Espace 2030 et son plan de mise en œuvre.

Je tiens également à exprimer toutes les reconnaissances et les vives félicitations de ma délégation au Directeur et à l'équipe du Bureau des affaires spatiales, pour le travail extraordinaire accompli pour la préparation de ce grand événement et à l'Autriche pour son accueil chaleureux et généreux.

Madame la Présidente, distingués délégués,

Le Canada se réjouit des efforts déployés par le Comité pour marquer le cinquantenaire de la première Conférence des Nations Unies sur l'exploration et les utilisations pacifiques de l'espace extra-atmosphérique en organisant un événement inclusif et de haut niveau pour promouvoir la coopération spatiale internationale et favoriser le dialogue entre tous les États membres des Nations Unies. UNISPACE + 50 offre une excellente opportunité pour la communauté spatiale dans son ensemble de renforcer le statut actuel du Comité et de contribuer à la définition de sa future vision de l'espace.

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Le Canada est honoré d'avoir joué un rôle de premier plan tout au long du processus préparatoire d'UNISPACE + 50. En tant que Président de la CUPPEA pour l'exercice biennal 2016-2017 et responsable des priorités thématiques 4 et 5 sur la météo spatiale et l'espace et la santé mondiale, le Canada s'est efforcé d'apporter une contribution significative à UNISPACE + 50 et à l'élaboration d'un programme «Espace 2030» pour le Comité, ses sous-comités et le Bureau. Au cours des trois dernières années, nous avons travaillé en étroite collaboration avec les collègues de la CUPPEA et de l'UNOOSA pour obtenir des résultats remarquables; ces efforts collectifs ont conduit à cette occasion mémorable. Aujourd'hui, nous avons une multitude de représentants de haut niveau réunis pour défendre collectivement l'exploration et les utilisations pacifiques de l'espace. En plus de souligner les nombreux avantages de l'espace, le Canada considère UNISPACE + 50 comme une excellente occasion de faire face à l'évolution rapide du programme spatial et au rôle unique joué par le Comité dans la coopération spatiale internationale et la gouvernance mondiale des activités spatiales.

Madame Chair, distinguished delegates,

The objectives of UNISPACE+50 echo those underlying the Canadian Space Program – to promote the peaceful use and development of space, to advance the knowledge of space through science, and to ensure that space science and technology provide social and economic benefits to all Canadians. All of Canada's accomplishments in space have held these objectives at the fore.

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Like the Committee, 2018 is a banner year for Canada in space with Canadian astronaut, David Saint-Jacques' upcoming six-month mission to the ISS, and the launch of our Radarsat Constellation Mission, which will significantly increase our capabilities in key domains including environmental monitoring, maritime surveillance, disaster management, and national security, among others.

Canada is proud to have played a role in the history of space exploration and diplomacy. As a COPUOS member since its establishment in 1959 and the third nation in space with the launch of our first satellite, Alouette-1, in 1962, we have built a rich space heritage and an industrial and scientific base with niche capabilities. Our early involvement in space has enabled Canadian companies to become leaders in optics, robotics, radar imagery and satellite communications. Today, Canada is one of five international partners in the International Space Station, and contributes to Mars exploration in partnership with NASA and the European Space Agency.

However, no matter how successful Canada has been in the in the past, we recognize that our future success is dependent on our ability to embrace and respond to the rapid changes emerging in the global space context.

Madame Chair, distinguished delegates,

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The thriving commercial space sector promises to make space more accessible to all, in particular to new, non-traditional space actors. Canada welcomes this fast-changing landscape and embraces the new opportunities that it presents to the Canadian space program and humanity writ large. Given these new space realities, we also recognize the need for increased international cooperation and global space governance to ensure the long-term sustainability of outer space activities that have become part of our modern fabric.

International cooperation makes it possible for countries with diverse capabilities and interests to pool their resources and work together to better understand our universe and better benefit from investments in space. Canada views collaboration in space as absolutely essential. Given the demands and challenges of space, the collaboration of all space players is required to achieve success. In this vein, Canada, through its space program, will continue to contribute to discoveries, technological breakthroughs, and societal and economic advantages stemming from the exploration and peaceful uses of space for the benefit of current and future generations. The International Charter ‘Space and Major Disaster’ a cooperative endeavour born from UNISPACE III, is an exemplary model of how space cooperation benefits humankind.

Madame Chair, distinguished delegates,

For the past 50 years, COPUOS has championed the exploration and peaceful uses of outer space and has made a substantial contribution to preserving the sustainability of outer space activities. In

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In addition to developing the core space treaties, it has provided a unique platform to promote: international cooperation and dialogue among space-faring and emerging space-faring nations, capacity-building efforts for developing countries, and the global governance of outer space activities to benefit people and the planet. The Committee's work, supported by the Office, has been intrinsic to establishing and maintaining multilateral collaboration on space science and technology and developing solutions to multilateral space policy issues

Given the increasing complexity of the space agenda, the renewed commitment to human deep space exploration, and the inclusion of sustainable development on Earth and the sustainability of outer space activities as key items on the global agenda, it is very timely for the Committee to launch the development a new, long-term vision for space.

Canada believes the Committee is an intrinsic element of the space governance matrix and UNISPACE+50 will contribute to increasing the widespread socio-economic benefits of space, while creating opportunities for space accessibility and space diplomacy. In this vein, Canada remains fully committed to engaging with Member States to develop a Space 2030 agenda and implementation plan, which is rooted in the seven UNISPACE+50 thematic priorities and champions the Committee's core work towards:

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- maintaining a safe, predictable, and sustainable outer space environment, beginning with the finalization, adoption and endorsement of the LTS guideline compendium at this year's session;
 - implementing transparency and confidence building measures in outer space activities;
 - addressing challenges caused by space debris, space weather and emerging space activities;
- and
- further leveraging space and space assets to support the successful implementation of UN Agenda 2030 and increasing the socio-economic benefits to humankind, particularly promoting diversity and women in space and underscoring how space can improve global health.

Madame Chair, distinguished delegates,

To conclude, the exploration and peaceful uses of outer space has enriched our collective knowledge and revolutionized life on Earth in ways that were unimaginable at the turn of the century. Space is now intrinsic to our daily lives, playing an invisible yet indispensable role. And as only a limited few will have the opportunity to experience space first hand and be "one of lucky ones" to quote Roberta Bondar, Canada's first female astronaut in space, who said that "the experience changed my life and my attitude towards life itself, " I strongly encourage you, as space Ambassadors, to continue using COPUOS to spread the practical and intangible benefits of space and inspire communities to innovate through space science and technology to push the boundaries

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of the possible and create new opportunities that will benefit current and future generations here on Earth. To this end, Canada strongly supports the UNISPACE+50 resolution before the Committee and reiterates its commitment to the development of a Space 2030 agenda to strengthen the Committee, its subcommittees and the Office for Outer Space Affairs.

Madame Chair, distinguished delegates, I thank you.