

Agenda Item 5: General Exchange of Views

Mr. Chairman and distinguished delegates,

At the outset, the Indian delegation would like to congratulate you Mr. Chair and the new bureau of Committee for 2022-23 and assure you of our wholehearted cooperation and support for the conduct of this 65th session. We express our appreciations for the outgoing Chair Mr. Marius-Ioan Piso of Romania for his able leadership in conducting the previous sessions. We also express our gratitude to the Acting Director of Office of Outer Space Affairs, Mr Niklas Hedman and his efficient team for the excellent work put in for the conduct of the session.

We welcome Angola, Bangladesh, Kuwait, Panama and Slovenia as the new members of the Committee. The rising membership of the committee is a reflection of the growing importance attached by states to the peaceful uses of outer space and to COPUOS as the forum for addressing the common issues concerning peaceful uses of outer space.

The Indian delegation welcomes the adoption of the General Assembly resolution “The ‘Space2030’ Agenda: space as a driver of sustainable development”. This will help the member states in perusing their space activities.

It becomes more and more important now that the outer space activities remain sustainable in long term and more people benefit from the uses of outer space for addressing the problems faced by the society and lead a better life. In this respect, the good progress made by the Working Group of STSC on Long-term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities is very encouraging.

Mr. Chairman,

Over the past five decades of pursuance of space activities, India has developed complete spectrum of civil space capabilities with an indigenously nurtured space programme, with the primary objective of utilizing space technology for national development and governance.

Indian delegation, while appreciating the achievement of other member states, would also like to inform this august gathering of its significant accomplishments since the last session of the committee in June 2021.

ISRO’s first human spaceflight programme Gaganyaan, made steady progress with qualification of key elements of the launch vehicle and orbital module. The preparations for third Indian lunar mission Chandrayaan-3, which aims for a soft landing on lunar surface, and the first Indian solar exploration mission Aditya-L1, which aims to study solar activities and its effects on space weather, progressed well. Astrosat, India’s dedicated astronomical observatory and Mars Orbiter, India’s first interplanetary mission continue to provide valuable scientific data, based on which exciting new finding were reported.

Space sector in India has been opened to private sector participation by the recent space reforms, for enhancing the economic benefits of space-based products and services, and to enable space sector to be a major driver of sustainable development. The use of space based applications in government ministries and departments is increasing with the increased integration of space sector with other sectors.

Mr. Chairman,

While pursuing its national space programme, India has remained engaged with other nations and multilateral organizations. Currently we have formal cooperation agreements with 61 countries and 5 multinational bodies. Recent additions to this list are MoU for space cooperation signed with UAE's Mohammed Bin Rashid Space Centre and Luxembourg.

The planned cooperative activities with other space agencies, including NASA-ISRO Synthetic Aperture Radar (NISAR), human spaceflight support projects with ROSCOSMOS and CNES, and joint satellite mission with Bhutan progressed well.

India also continued its efforts on capacity building front through UN Centre for Space Science and Technology Education in Asia and the Pacific & Indian Institute of Remote Sensing, bringing the total number of beneficiaries of various training programmes to more than 3502 officials from 109 countries. In fulfilment of India's commitment made in UNISPACE+50, India offered UNNATI training on nanosatellite building for 60 officials from 33 nations. The delegation is pleased to inform the committee that ISRO has announced the call for third batch of UNNATI training program which would be conducted from October 15 to December 15, 2022 in coordination with UNOOSA. We invite member states, especially space aspiring countries, to take advantage of this unique 8 week long capacity building program which includes hands-on experience in building and testing of nano-satellites.

Mr. Chairman,

India is a party to all the major international UN space treaties and also implements all the outer space related instruments, including the UN Space Debris Mitigation Guidelines. India also implements a number of Transparency and Confidence Building Measures (TCBMs) - including registering space objects, prelaunch notifications, measures in harmony with the Space Debris Mitigation Guidelines and numerous international cooperation activities. India is also committed to implement the 21 guidelines on Long-Term Sustainability of outer space activities to the extent possible.

The Indian delegation would like to reiterate its assurance to the Committee of its continued cooperation and support in conducting this session, and furthering the cause of peaceful uses of outer space.

Thank you Mr. Chairman and distinguished delegates.