

Bangladesh Statement
at the 66th Session of the United Nations
Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS)
by
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Charge d’Affaires, a.i.
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Agenda Item 4: General exchange of views

Mr. Chair (*Mr. Omran Sharaf, Project Director of the Emirates Mars Mission, Mohammed bin Rashid Space Centre, UAE*),

At the beginning, I would like to assure you of Bangladesh delegation’s full support in discharging your important responsibilities during your chairmanship.

I also take this opportunity to sincerely thank Mr. Niklas Hedman, Acting Director of the Office for Outer Space Affairs, and the Secretariat for the excellent preparations made for this session.

Mr. Chair,

We welcome Guatemala and Uzbekistan as new members of the Committee, and we appreciate the steady growth of COPUOS in recent times. We believe that COPUOS has a critical role in promoting the peaceful uses of outer space. For a shared and sustainable future, we must work to ensure the use and exploration of the outer space for peaceful purposes only, benefitting all countries and ‘leaving no one behind’. We would like to recall the UNGA resolution 73/6 and the “Space2030” Agenda, and would like to emphasize on the contribution of peaceful uses of outer space to socio-economic development, including the attainment of the SDGs. We strongly believe that enhanced international cooperation as well as capacity building, technical assistance and transfer of technology for developing countries are critical to reach our desired goals.

We reiterate our support for the 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 sustainable use of the outer space for the benefit and in the interests of all. At the same time, we urge all states to prevent an arms race in the outer space and weaponizing of any kind in the outer space.

Mr. Chair,

Now I would like to shed light on our own national initiatives with regards to space affairs.

Bangladesh Space Research and Remote Sensing Organization (SPARRSO), which is a multi-disciplinary research and development organization covering research in different geo-disciplinary area, was established in 1980 as the national space agency of Bangladesh to work in space research, space technology development and space applications in the country for peaceful purposes. SPARRSO works on earth observation and weather monitoring, land use mapping, river and coastal monitoring including long-term changes in the largest mangrove forest in the world, crop monitoring including acreage estimation, weather forecasting, flood area mapping, marine fishing zones identification system in the Bay of Bengal and so on. SPARRSO plays an important role on critical issues such as disaster management and mega-infrastructure development and supports other government organizations for capacity building in the Graphic Information System (GIS) and space technology application domain.

Mr. Chair,

To support the national 'Vision 2041' as envisaged by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, SPARRSO adopted short-, medium- and long-term plans to tackle the technological gaps and for the advancement of space infrastructure and technology in Bangladesh. While the short-term plan includes establishment of Geostationary and Polar orbiting Satellite Ground Stations, conducting study for development and launching of Earth Observation Satellite and establishment of AIT Lab; the medium-term plan consists of following elements: installation of National Space Observatory, integrated Training and Research Centre for the Expansion of Space Technology, and establishment of

Assembly, Integration and Testing (AIT) Lab for the development of satellites. Our long-term plan has the following elements: Space Science Building for Advanced Research, development and launching of indigenous satellite, industrial park for boosting space economy, and space research and remote sensing centres at different zones to expand space technology. We are working for a long-term, affordable and sustainable national space programme specifically tailored to national requirements, with better earth observation system for land use; improved communication services; catalysing scientific research and home-grown high-tech support industries. To that end, we are at present working with the Asia-Pacific Space Cooperation Organization (APSCO) and United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), among other institutions and agencies.

Mr. Chair,

Bangladesh launched its first communication satellite, Bangabandhu-1, in 2018. The satellite is located at the 119.1° East longitude geostationary slot. The satellite is having 40 transponders in Ku band and C band providing telecommunication, broadcasting, VSAT facilities, DTH, banking services, distance learning, telemedicine services, etc. We have initiated preparations for Bangabandhu-2 satellite for earth observation, which is expected to provide support for precision agriculture, resource management, environmental monitoring, urban area mapping, disaster management, surveillance of the maritime territories, etc.

Mr. Chair,

We would like to work closely with COPUOS and UNOOSA on the Sustainable Development Goals and the 'Space 2030 Agenda', universal and equal access to outer space, international cooperation, strengthening the capacity building of and technical assistance to the developing countries in utilizing space applications, and enhanced inclusivity in space affairs.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.