

**AFRICAN GROUP STATEMENT DURING THE SIXTY-FIRST SESSION OF THE  
LEGAL SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE UNITED NATIONS COMMITTEE ON THE  
PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE**

**TO BE DELIVERED BY H.E AMBASSADOR MOHAMED HAMDY MOHAMED  
ELMOLLA OF THE ARAB REPUBLIC OF EGYPT AND CHAIR OF THE AFRICA  
GROUP**

**ITEM 4: GENERAL EXCHANGE OF VIEWS**

**28 MARCH TO 8 APRIL 2022.**

**Madam Chairperson,**

1. Allow me on behalf of the Africa Group, to express my warm congratulations to Ms Nomfuneko Majaja of South Africa on her election as Chair of the Legal Subcommittee as well as the other elected members of the Bureau. The Group assures you of its full cooperation and support in discharging your mandate.
2. The Group also expresses its appreciation to the Office of Outer Space Affairs led by Mr Niklas Hedman for ably carrying out the preparatory work for this 61st Session.
3. At the outset, the Africa Group aligns itself with the Statement delivered by H.E Ambassador Azzeddine Farhane on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

**Madam Chairperson,**

4. The Group would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the work carried out by the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space COPUOS and its two Subcommittees in promoting international cooperation on the peaceful use of outer space through the elaboration of United Nations treaties governing outer space activities as well as offering a suitable forum to discuss matters that impact the development of all nations. We also acknowledge and welcome the growing number of parties to the UN treaties on outer space and encourage those States that have not yet become parties to them to consider doing so. (agreed ad ref)
5. To this end, the Group wishes to underscore that the sub-committee shall be guided by the established principles of outer space activities, namely, the principle of exploration and use of outer space on the basis of equality, the principle of the non-appropriation of outer space including the moon and other celestial bodies, and the peaceful uses of outer space for the benefit of all. (agreed ad ref)

**Madam Chairperson,**

6. The Group is pleased to note that activities in outer space in the last decades have fundamentally increased within developing countries, and, in particular, African countries. Whilst emerging space-faring nations have shown the vast potential of outer space, limitations and vulnerabilities have also been exhibited. We must underscore the importance of ensuring that new space actors especially those from developing countries are given opportunities and conditions to participate on an equal footing and also reap the benefits of space activities, in line with the provisions of the Outer Space Treaty.
  
7. The benefits derived from space technologies play an instrumental role in meeting the challenges of sustainable development. In this regard, we consider it essential to re-double efforts to extend to all States the benefits derived from outer space activities as well as enhance international cooperation to promote a wider and more active involvement in outer space activities of the members of this group. In addition, capacity building and technical assistance remain key factors in the expansion of the abilities of those working in the space field, permitting them to gain expertise and knowledge.
  
8. The presence of suitable professionals, in particular in developing countries, who are able to provide legal advice and disseminate information and knowledge relating to space law therefore is reliant on the availability of suitable opportunities for education in space law and policy. Space technologies can also assist in empowering women through STEM and the Office for Outer Space Affairs is therefore encouraged to continue conducting targeted capacity-building, education and training in space law and policy, modelled upon the UN Platform for Space-based Information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response (UN-SPIDER).

9. In light of the growing number of space actors and the benefits derived from space science technology and their applications accelerating the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the conduct of such activities by States and intergovernmental and non-governmental entities, continues to expand. Due to this reality, much work remains to be done and many subjects should still be considered in the legal international framework of space activities. The Group underscores that the security and safety of outer space will only be warranted if all activities in the space environment are carried out in accordance with applicable international law, rules, regulations, and recommendations. Hence, it is of importance to ensure greater cooperation and interaction between the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee and Legal Subcommittee of COPUOS.

**Madam Chairperson,**

10. In a spirit of cooperation and consensus, it is the hope of the Africa Group that we will be able to address core issues relating to legal challenges of space activities and to come up with conclusions and recommendations which will contribute to global prosperity through the promotion of enhanced international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space.

I thank you.