

**Statement of the Delegation of the  
Islamic Republic of Iran**

**Agenda Item 5: Status and Application  
of the five UN treaties on Outer space**

**COPUOS Legal Sub-Committee**

**Vienna, 20-31 March 2023**

**Madam Chairperson,**

We thank you for the floor,

The framework Treaty of OST 1967 is the cornerstone for the application of space law. In particular its Article III is about the activities of the States Parties that shall be in accordance with International Law, including the Charter of the United Nations. And in Accordance with Article VI

of this Treaty, States Parties shall bear international responsibility for national activities in outer space whether such activities are carried on by governmental agencies or by non-governmental entities, and for assuring that national activities are carried out in conformity with the provisions set forth in the treaty. The activities of non-governmental entities in outer space shall require authorization and continuing supervision by the appropriate State Party to the Treaty.

In this vein, the responsibility for compliance of the non-governmental entities and companies activities in outer space shall be borne by the State Party that those entities are under its jurisdiction and control.

In this regard, as highlighted in our earlier statement in Sixty Session of the STSC, in February 2023 as well as our yesterday statement ,the Islamic

Republic of Iran has formally objected to the unauthorized and illegal operation of the broadband satellite Internet services known as “Starlink” within its territory by a mega-constellation operator (SpaceX) with the U.S. government support to the COPUOS, ITU, UN Security Council as well as through appropriate channels to the U.S.

The issue of "territorial rights to provide services" is one of the most fundamental issues in the development and expansion of satellite services in different countries, especially satellite internet systems. Based on the territorial rights to providing services, satellite operators need to obtain a license from countries to provide services to them. These licenses are generally given by the communication regulators of countries and according to the requirements and conditions of that country.

Therefore, the Starlink operation within the territory of Iran without obtaining a license is against international law, the UN Charter, in particular the inviolability of the “sovereign equality” of all UN members, as well as OST 1967 Articles III & VI, and the U.S. government that SpaceX is under its jurisdiction and control is held responsible for such internationally wrongful act. Therefore, SpaceX shall obtain the official license to legalize its activities in Iran. This has been communicated to U.S. FCC and SpaceX Corporation, whose founder and CEO has acknowledged that “nearly 100 Starlink terminals are currently operating in Iran” without authorization. This is a very serious concern on the issue of the application of Article III & VI of OST 1967 that we are obliged to address under this agenda item. In this regard, We have registered a Verbal- Note dated 25<sup>th</sup> November 2022 with

UNOOSA, we have emphasized that the conduct and action of the SpaceX within the territory of our country is a blatant breach of sovereignty, territorial integrity, political independent and sovereign jurisdiction of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

We think that this new challenges of mega constellations such as SpaceX's unauthorized activity in The Territory of the Islamic Republic of Iran shall be well addressed in LSC and COPUOS and as a result those entities and their respective governments shall be advised and recommended to respect to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of other States that they provide services. Consequently, we strongly ask U.S government to stop the unauthorized activity of the SpaceX in the territory of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

