

**Africa Group Statement for the Fifty-Ninth Session of
the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee of the
United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of
Outer Space**

**Delivered by His Excellency Ambassador
Mr. Mohamed Hamdy Mohamed ELMOLLA**

**Permanent Representative of the Arab Republic of
Egypt to the United Nations Office on the Peaceful
Uses of Outer Space and Chair of the Africa Group**

(7-18 February 2022)

Your Excellency, Ambassador Juan Francisco Facetti; Chair of the 59th Session of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space;

Director of the Office for Outer Space Affairs, Ms Simonetta Di Pippo;

Excellencies; Distinguished Guests; Ladies and Gentlemen

The African Group expresses its appreciation to the outgoing Chair of the STSC, Ms Natália Archinard of the Swiss Confederation for her outstanding leadership in guiding the work of the Subcommittee and congratulates H.E. Ambassador Juan Francisco Facetti, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Paraguay, as the incoming Chair. Please be assured of the Group's support.

The Africa Group also wishes to thank the Secretariat for the preparations undertaken in facilitating this meeting, in spite of the numerous challenges posed by the (COVID-19) pandemic.

Chairperson,

At the outset, the Africa Group aligns itself with the statement delivered by the Group of 77 and China.

The Africa Group welcomes the Republics of Angola, Bangladesh, Kuwait, Panama and Slovenia as new members of the Committee and encourages other developing countries to consider joining the Committee.

The Africa Group acknowledges the critical role the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and its two Subcommittees plays in promoting international cooperation on the exploration and peaceful uses of outer space and in the utilisation of space science and technology for sustainable economic and social development. The valuable assistance rendered to developing countries in establishing legal and regulatory frameworks to govern space activities and in strengthening their capacity to use space

science technology and applications is imperative in achieving the aspirations of the people of Africa and African Diaspora through African Union Agenda 2063.

As part of the scientific leg of Agenda 2063, the African scientific community developed a Science, Technology and Innovation Strategy for Africa (STISA-2024), which identified outerspace as one of its flagship programmes, underscoring the critical role of space in addressing development challenges and Africa's commitment towards developing a coordinated African space process.

The African Group's participation in the sub-committee is 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.

Chairperson,

In line with established practice, the Africa Group uses this opportunity to brief on the latest developments regarding the African Space Policy and Strategy. In this regard, the Group wishes to inform that Professor Mohammed Belhocine, from People's Democratic Republic of Algeria was elected the new AU Commissioner for Education, Science, Technology and Innovation.

Chairperson,

The Africa Group looks forward to the holding of the Africa Space Week in Nairobi, Kenya in September 2022 as it provides an innovative platform for African space industry stakeholders to deliberate on expanding Africa's space industry and strengthen efforts to promote and enable intra-Africa and international cooperation on space activities.

The African Space Agency hosted by the Arab Republic of Egypt marks an important milestone in achieving the abovementioned objectives and the Group looks forward to the development of the African Space Policy and the African Space strategy as a step forward in this regard

Further to the above, the first satellite constellation that was fully developed on the African continent, under Space-X Transporter -3 Mission was launched 13 January 2022. The full MDA-SAT constellation will be an operational constellation of nine satellites that will detect, identify, and monitor vessels in real time in support of the maritime industry.

The Africa Group notes with appreciation the increasing significance of space-based information for disaster management and emergency response, through the utilization of remote sensing data and Earth observation satellites for developing multi-hazard early warning systems and disaster impact analysis for monitoring the COVID-19 pandemic and other types of natural disasters.

Chairperson,

The Group welcomes the adoption of Resolution 76/3 entitled: The 'Space2030' Agenda: Space as a Driver of Sustainable Development by the UN General Assembly on 25 October 2021. The Group considers "Space2030" Agenda imperative for the achievement of sustainable development through the promotion of the use of space technologies and applications and space-derived data. To this end, the Group remains convinced that **education, technical assistance, and capacity-building initiatives** are critical in bridging the developmental gaps between countries in the optimum use of space technology and applications to facilitate technology transfer that enable countries develop local solutions to global problems. States should avoid any measures that could hamper its implementation.

The Group also notes with appreciation the work of the African Regional Centres for Space Science and Technology Education located in Morocco and Nigeria and calls upon

the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space to continue supporting the Regional Centres as well as other regional initiatives to promote greater African excellency and improved participation of women.

Chairperson,

The Group, notes with appreciation the establishment of the Working Group on the Long-Term Sustainability (LTS) of Outer Space Activities under the able chairship of Mr. Umamaheswaran R. of India and reiterates its view that enhanced international cooperation will go a long way in ensuring adherence to established principles of peaceful uses of outer space. The Group looks forward towards the achievement of consensus on the Terms of Reference, Methods of Work and Workplan so that substantive and in-depth discussions could commence within the working group.

Chairperson,

The Africa Group remains concerned about the amount of space debris and the lack of consensus on how best to remove them. The Group believes that the major contributors to space debris must take appropriate responsibility in its mitigation and removal under an internationally agreed framework.

Equally, the Group continues to express its grave concern regarding the securitization of space and maintains that an arms race to space goes contrary to the principle of peaceful uses of outer space. In this regard, the Group calls upon all States to refrain from this practice and supports the need to seek a speedy resolution.

In conclusion, the Group reiterates its support for the work of the committee and looks forward to enhanced cooperation on the peaceful uses of outer space for the benefit of all.

I thank you