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English only

**Committee on the Peaceful
Uses of Outer Space**
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**Information on the official visit to China of the Director of the United Nations
Office for Outer Space Affairs (10-24 April 2017)**

Note by the Secretariat

1. Upon invitation of the Government of China, the Director of the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs, Ms. Simonetta Di Pippo, conducted an official visit to China on the occasion of remarkable events for space activities of this State, namely, Tianzhou 1 spaceship launch and 2nd Space Day of China.

Tianzhou 1 spaceship launch

2. The Tianzhou 1 cargo spaceship was successfully launched on the Long March 7 (Y2) launcher from the Wenchang Space Launch Center in the Hainan province on 20 April, at 19:41, nominally. The Tianzhou 1 cargo spaceship performed its 2-day flight to reach the Tiangong 2 space laboratory in orbit, and docked successfully on 22 April, after having performed nominally its rendezvous and docking manoeuvres. The Tianzhou 1 mission was aimed to conduct in-orbit propellant refuelling experiments, which has been fulfilling afterwards. It was the first time the Tianzhou spaceship was launched aboard the Long March 7 launch system, and the third launch event taking place from Wenchang Space Launch Center, which is the fourth launch site in China to have been developed.



3. The launch was observed by the delegation consisted of the Director of the Office and the Permanent Representatives to the United Nations (Vienna) of the following States: Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Pakistan, Philippines and South Africa. This event was preceded by a technical tour of the Wenchang Space Launch Center, a modern, quite extended and sophisticated launch complex, which included the control center and the assembly facility.

4. This was the occasion to underline the importance of the cooperation established between the Office and China in bringing the benefits of space to humankind. The Chinese representatives stressed their commitment to the peaceful uses and exploration of outer space, with the belief that the exploration and uses of outer space have to be conducted in a transparent and open manner, contributing in this way to broadening international cooperation. The Director of the Office was interviewed by several important TV channels, reaching a very broad audience with key messages linked to the use of space technology to fulfil the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the importance of the collaboration between the Office and China to this extent.

2nd China Space Day

5. The home event took place in Xi'an, at the Northwestern Polytechnical University, on 24 April, at the occasion of the 47th anniversary of the launch of the first Chinese satellite, Dongfanghong 1. This was an occasion for the Director of the Office during her speech at the ceremony to underline that in the years since entering the space age in 1970, China has contributed substantially to international cooperation in the peaceful exploration and use of outer space, also providing essential support to the work of the Office. The Director underlined that currently, China is, the first contributor, counting both cash and in-kind contributions, to the activities of the Office.

6. The main opening ceremony was followed by a panel discussion, entitled "Space Living Room", moderated by a journalist from China Central Television (CCTV), Guo Zhijian, featuring as panellists the Director of the Office, a former European Space Agency (ESA) astronaut, Gerhard Thiele, the Secretary General of CNSA, Tian Yulong, the Vice President of the China Aerospace Science and Industry Corporation (CASIC), Fang Xiangming, and two Academicians, the Director of Science and Technology Committee of the China Aerospace Science and Technology Corporation (CASC), Bao Weimin and the Vice President of Northwestern Polytechnical University, Wei Bingbo. This was an occasion to underline the importance of space as a tool for fulfilling the 17 SDGs, and to inform about the preparation of UNISPACE+50 and its importance in bringing the benefits of space to humankind.

7. Before returning to Vienna, the Director of the Office gave a lecture to the students of the Northwestern Polytechnical University in a very crowded hall, talking about the use and exploration of outer space and the role of the Office.

Other activities

8. Besides the above-mentioned, the Director of the Office took part in other important events. The Director conducted bilateral meetings with the China National Space Administration (CNSA) and China Manned Space Agency (CMSA) to discuss a number of ongoing and planned joint activities and projects.

9. Also, the Director of the Office paid visits to the China Astronaut Training Center, where the Neutral Buoyancy Facility, the EVA Training Facility, and the Space Flight Simulators are located, and to the China Academy of Space Technology (CAST), where the assembly and integration test facilities for manned spacecrafts and satellites are located, and the milestones of the Chinese space program are presented in the exhibition hall, starting from the Dongfanghong 1 satellite, launched on 24 April 1970, which represents the starting point of the space programme in China.

10. Finally, the official visit of the Director also included attendance of a detailed presentation of the Beidou system and its applications organized by the China Satellite Navigation Office, and a visit to the Regional Centre for Space Science and Technology Education in Asia and the Pacific affiliated to the United Nations (RCSSTEAP - China), located at the Beihang University.

Concluding considerations

11. This official visit was the first in a series of similar visits to observe the status of space activities conducted by States and international intergovernmental organizations to be organized in the future. Such visits are aimed at substantially strengthening mutual ties between the Office and States members and permanent observers of the Committee, as well as at the promotion of the position of the Office as a main United Nations facilitator that brings space actors together, as a catalyst that materialize concerted actions in space cooperation, and as a promoter that builds awareness of the importance of space solutions for dealing with local and global challenges, as well as a leading international conductor of capacity-building activities that harness space tools for development, and promotes awareness through the celebration of space achievements and milestones.

12. The information from such visits is expected to be shared with States members and permanent observers of the Committee with the intent to disseminate information about national and international space activities from the Office's perspective, and further contribute into capacity in transparency and confidence building in international space endeavours.

Annexes:

- 1) Press release by the United Nations Information Service (UNIS) “Office for Outer Space Affairs and China renew commitment to cooperation in space activities”.
 - 2) Remarks by UNOOSA Director Simonetta Di Pippo on the occasion of the launch of Tianzhou-1 Spacecraft to Tiangong-2 (20 April 2017).
 - 3) Remarks by UNOOSA Director Simonetta Di Pippo at Space Day of China (24 April 2017).
 - 4) Remarks by UNOOSA Director Simonetta Di Pippo at "Space Living Room" Forum, 2017 Space Day of China (24 April 2017).
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Annex 1.

UNIS/OS/479

21 April 2017

Office for Outer Space Affairs and China renew commitment to cooperation in space activities

VIENNA, 21 April (UN Information Service) - The United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs (UNOOSA) and China have renewed their commitment to cooperation in bringing the benefits of space to all humankind.

During an official visit to China by UNOOSA Director Simonetta Di Pippo, UNOOSA and China are reiterating their shared commitment to the peaceful exploration and use of outer space, as well as underlining the significant contributions that space activities can make to sustainable development.

"I greatly appreciate China's contribution to international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space and its ongoing and wide-ranging support of the Office's activities. This support includes cooperation on Earth Observation Data and technical support from the China National Space Administration, our joint project with the China Manned Space Agency to provide access to China's future space station for United Nations Member States, particularly developing states, and China's support to the United Nations Platform for Space-based Information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response, and much more. I look forward to strengthening our cooperation," said Ms. Di Pippo.

UNOOSA and China also called for increased international cooperation for the benefit of all countries in space research, applications, operations and exploration.

"China is always committed to the peaceful exploration and use of outer space, and believes that the exploration and use of outer space should be carried out for the benefit of all humankind. China will continue closely cooperating with UNOOSA and all countries in the world in a transparent and open manner, and contributing to broadening international cooperation. China believes such cooperation will contribute to promoting mutual understanding and strengthening the friendly relations between States and peoples," said Ambassador SHI Zhongjun, Permanent Representative of China to the United Nations and other International Organizations in Vienna.

While in China, Ms. Di Pippo observed from Wenchang Space Launch Site on 20 April the launch of "Tianzhou-1", China's first cargo spacecraft, to "Tiangong-2", China's space laboratory. This launch will further promote China's manned space programme. She will also visit other facilities and institutions in Beijing, including astronaut training facilities, the spacecraft and satellite AIT (Assembly, Integration and Test) facilities, the test and assessment system, the application facilities of the Beidou Navigation Satellite System, and the Regional Centre for Space Science and Technology Education in Asia and the Pacific, along with six Vienna-based Ambassadors. Ms. Di Pippo will also participate in activities to celebrate the Space Day of China, which takes place on April 24.

Annex 2.

Launch of Tianzhou-1 Spacecraft to Tiangong-2
20 April 2017
Remarks by UNOOSA Director Simonetta Di Pippo

Ladies and gentlemen, dear colleagues and friends

It is a pleasure and an honour to join you today to witness the launch of the Tianzhou-1 spacecraft to the Tiangong-2 space laboratory. This is an exciting and important step in the realisation of China's great endeavour, the Chinese Large Modular Space Station. It is indeed an admirable effort in scientific and technological capability, and shows the innovative work performed by so many dedicated and well trained professionals. My warmest congratulations to all involved in today's success.

Since the launch of the first Chinese satellite in 1970, China has become one of the major space faring nations. Its state of the art space programme, including weather monitoring in geostationary orbit with the Feng Yun constellation, high resolution remote sensing with the recent launch of SuperView-1 01 and 02, the ambitious Beidou programme for global positioning, and a well-established human flight programme, is one of the most holistic and technologically advanced in the world.

With the global challenges we all face here on Earth, it is important to foster collaboration and cooperation in the field of space activities, including the use of space for sustainable development, and maintain the use of outer space for peaceful purposes. China makes an active and meaningful contribution in this regard, especially as a member of the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space since 1980. The dedication of China to these goals is also evident in its wide-ranging and generous support to the work of the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs, support that we very much appreciate. In fact, China has pledged to open up access to its space station for other Member States of the United Nations, particularly developing countries, in collaboration with UNOOSA.

UNOOSA's valued partnership with China means that it is particularly exciting for me to be a guest here at Wenchang today to see China's space endeavours up close. The completion of the Chinese space station will be an important achievement not only for China, but for our shared goal of international cooperation in bringing the benefits of space to all.

As we like to say at UNOOSA, by working together, the sky is no longer limit. Thank you, China, for your contributions and achievements. And, once again, congratulations on today's successful launch.

Thank you.

Annex 3.

**Space Day of China
24 April 2017
Remarks by UNOOSA Director Simonetta Di Pippo**

Ladies and gentlemen, dear colleagues and friends,

It is a real honour and pleasure to be with you here today to celebrate China's Space Day on the 47th anniversary of the launch of the first Chinese satellite, Dongfanghong-1.

In the years since entering the space age in 1970, China has contributed to international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space and provided essential support to the work of the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs. China has been an active member of the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS) since joining in 1980, and has hosted since 2010 a UNOOSA office for the United Nations Platform for Space-based Information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response (UN-SPIDER). And, in 2014, the Regional Centre for Space Science and Technology Education in Asia and the Pacific was inaugurated at the Beihang University in Beijing.

In 2015 UNOOSA and the China National Space Administration signed an Agreement through which Chinese satellite Earth Observation data will be available to support the United Nations in the areas of disaster management and disaster risk reduction. In addition, just last year we signed an agreement with the China Manned Space Agency to provide opportunities to United Nations Member States, particularly developing countries, to conduct space experiments on-board China's space station, as well as to potentially provide flight opportunities for astronauts and payload engineers. China also makes contributions in the area of space law, and the Office and China have just this week announced our strong commitment to ongoing cooperation. And China contributes to the activities of UNOOSA with other ways and means.

These examples demonstrate how wide-ranging and holistic China's contributions are to the work of UNOOSA and our goal of bringing the benefits of space to humankind. Please let me take this opportunity, on this important day of celebration, to express my deep appreciation for China's support of the Office.

Ladies and gentlemen,

A year ago you celebrated the first Space Day. The past 12 months have seen many significant and impressive achievements in China's space activities, including 22 launches with the Long March carrier rockets, the launch of the TianGong-2 space laboratory and Shenzhou-11, the formal approval of a Mars exploration mission, the launch of 3 more Beidou satellites, the successful return of China's first ever microgravity experiment satellite Shijian-10, and much more. And, just a few days ago, I had the immense honour of witnessing the launch of a cargo ship to your space station. What a productive year it's been! I can't wait to see what China achieves in the next year, and beyond.

Speaking of future endeavours, in June 2018 the international community will come together in Vienna for UNISPACE+50. UNISPACE+50 will be a special segment of the 61st session of COPUOS to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the first United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. But UNISPACE+50 will also be a time to look forward, to learn from past experiences and work towards

establishing a global space agenda for 2030, in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 sustainable development goals, in particular. By setting ourselves ambitious goals, the global space community can contribute to shaping the future of our planet and humankind.

China is already an active participant in UNISPACE+50 preparations, including by co-chairing the Action Team on Exploration and Innovation, and by numerous contributions to the High Level Forum on space as a driver for socioeconomic development in Dubai last November. I would like to express my appreciation to China for its commitment to this process, and I look forward to China's ongoing contributions to UNISPACE+50.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The expanding role of space science, technology and applications in meeting the growing challenges to humanity, societal development, and to planet Earth itself is unprecedented. And, at the same time, space is a common domain that we must protect for all our future generations. China has already shown its commitment to these efforts, both in the past and going forward.

Thank you very much, China, for your contributions and, again, please accept my warmest congratulations for Space Day.

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Annex 4.

**"Space Living Room" Forum, 2017 Space Day of China
24 April 2017
Remarks by UNOOSA Director Simonetta Di Pippo**

Ladies and gentlemen, dear colleagues and friends,

It is a pleasure to participate in this "Space Living Room" Forum as a celebration of Space Day of China along. It is also an honour to join so many distinguished guests to discuss how space can improve life here on Earth.

Space activities are crucial in our everyday lives. Applications derived from satellites and space technologies influence and enable many of the things we do and take for granted on a daily basis, be it using a mobile phone, checking the weather forecast, or getting support after a disaster. Space is also a long-term driver for innovation and creates new opportunities for addressing global challenges.

There are two essential steps we need to take so that humankind benefits from all that space can give us:

- increase access to space technologies; and
- promote international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space.

Achieving these goals will enable us to make space a driver for equality and for the attainment of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals. This Agenda is the international community's undertaking to build a more equitable, environment-conscious and prosperous global society by the year 2030.

Space-based technology and applications can support the fulfilment of the Sustainable Development Goals in different ways. For example, space-based data provides systematic observations to help us monitor climate change and mitigate its effects. Satellite images can help us monitor rainfall and crops, which in turn supports agricultural management and food security.

Space-based information is also relevant in case of disaster. Earth observation data can show within a few hours the conditions of a region affected by, say, a hurricane or an earthquake, thereby providing valuable and timely information about damage, migration, conditions of the infrastructures, and so on.

It is also important to remember that space fosters industrial and economic development; investing in space creates new jobs, encourages innovation, and has a positive effect on the wealth of the whole country.

Space is truly a resource for making life on this planet better for everyone. At the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs we work to make this a reality, and welcome new ideas and inputs. I look forward to hearing the questions and contributions at today's Forum.

Thank you.