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Summary record of the 10th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Wednesday, 11 October 2017, at 10 a.m.

Chair: Ms. Ozgur (Vice-Chair) . . . . . (Turkey)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

In the absence of Mr. Ramirez Carreño (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela), Ms. Ozgur (Turkey), Vice-Chair, took the Chair.

Agenda item 52: International cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space (A/72/20)

1. **The Chair** said that in 2017, International Space Week coincided with the celebration of two important milestones: the sixtieth anniversary of the launch of the first artificial Earth satellite, Sputnik I, by the Soviet Union, and the fiftieth anniversary of the entry into force of the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies (the Outer Space Treaty).

2. **Ms. Di Pippo** (Director, United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs) said that the sixtieth anniversary of the launch of Sputnik I and the fiftieth anniversary of the Outer Space Treaty were an opportunity to celebrate international cooperation and the achievements facilitated by the Treaty, while also looking ahead to the exciting future of space activities, including further exploration of the solar system and the development of new technologies to improve life on Earth.

A short video message recorded by the crew of the International Space Station on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the Outer Space Treaty was shown.

3. **Mr. Kendall** (Canada), speaking in his capacity as Chair of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS) and introducing the report of its sixtieth session (A/72/20), welcomed New Zealand, whose membership brought the Committee total to 84 States. The Committee had also recommended Bahrain, Denmark and Norway for membership and the European Science Foundation and the University Space Engineering Consortium for permanent observer status. The growing COPUOS membership confirmed both the increasing importance attached to international cooperation in outer space affairs, and the essential role of COPUOS as a key platform for the global governance of outer space activities and maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes.

4. In the context of the sixtieth anniversary of the launch of Sputnik I and the fiftieth anniversary of the Outer Space Treaty, it was clear that the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes had changed dramatically, adding significant complexity to the issues being considered by the Committee, which continued to work towards consensus on many topics relating to the safety, security and sustainability of outer space activities, as well as the global governance of such activities.

5. The fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE+50) in 2018 was an occasion to respond to new realities, challenges and opportunities with regard to the global governance of outer space activities. UNISPACE+50 would support the broader efforts of the Secretary-General to engage with Member States with a view to strengthening the contributions of space technology and its applications to meet the goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (the 2030 Agenda) through a unique cross-sectoral approach to space science, technology, policy and law and the elaboration of a “Space 2030” agenda.

6. COPUOUS supported transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space activities, currently demonstrated through its diligent efforts to develop a compendium of guidelines for the long-term sustainability of outer space activities. COPUOS member States were working to achieve consensus on the guidelines to safeguard outer space as a common heritage for current and future generations. The unprecedented development of space activities by a broad range of actors underscored the need to ensure the long-term sustainability of outer space activities and to expand the role of space science and technology applications to face the growing challenges to humanity.

7. COPUOUS continued to encourage dialogue between the First and Fourth Committees on space security and sustainability, including during their annual joint panel discussion. It recognized the contribution of the Outer Space Treaty to the international legal framework governing space activities in the interest of maintaining international peace and security and promoting international cooperation and understanding. The Fourth Committee would therefore consider a draft declaration commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of the Treaty during the current session. As the universalization of the core United Nations treaties on outer space and their national implementation were vital to strengthening the global framework governing space activities, he encouraged all States to become parties, in particular to the Outer Space Treaty, at their earliest convenience.

8. The 2030 Agenda was closely linked to the broader concern of space security: global development was reliant on the use of space tools, which required the long-term sustainability of both outer space activities and the space environment itself. Dialogue between the major spacefaring nations and emerging space nations

was a prerequisite for success in the matter. Several cross-cutting areas in the work of COPUOUS, its subsidiary bodies, and the Office for Outer Space Affairs contributed significantly to strengthening the collaborative space endeavour. UNISPACE+50 was not an end goal: it should mark the beginning of more inclusive space governance process, with a view to building a stronger global space economy and space society, enhancing space accessibility and strengthening space diplomacy.

9. **Ms. Krisnamurthi** (Indonesia), speaking on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), said that General Assembly resolution 71/90 on International cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space had urged all Member States to carry out their space exploration activities for exclusively peaceful purposes and to work together to prevent the possibility of an arms race in outer space. The utilization of outer space must be for the benefit and interest of all countries, irrespective of their degree of economic or scientific development, and in conformity with applicable international law. Outer space, including the Moon and other celestial bodies, must not be appropriated or occupied by any State. Outer space was a common heritage of humankind, and its use must be strictly peaceful and for the improvement of living conditions on Earth.

10. Space technology and its applications were indispensable elements for viable, long-term solutions to many development challenges and would help to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. Regional and interregional cooperation in the domain of space activities was essential to strengthen the peaceful uses of outer space and assist States in the development of their space capabilities. Given that Southeast Asia dealt with many natural disasters, ASEAN appreciated the importance of space-based technologies, including satellite images, for enhancing disaster risk preparedness, response and mitigation capacities. Such technologies could improve early warning systems and enable more effective search and rescue operations. In that connection, ASEAN reiterated the importance of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030, which clearly recognized the value of space-based technology for those purposes.

11. As space-based technologies required significant resources, many developing countries had been unable to reap the full benefits of the peaceful uses of outer space; closer partnership with developing countries, on the part of developed countries and the relevant international organizations and agencies, was therefore encouraged.

12. ASEAN supported efforts to strengthen the outer space governance framework in an inclusive manner; any steps to develop international principles for outer space activities must be taken transparently and inclusively through intergovernmental processes within the context of the United Nations and respect the principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity and equal access for all States. It was necessary to ensure the safe and responsible conduct of all space activities and to promote international, regional and interregional cooperation in the matter. In that regard, ASEAN welcomed the upcoming joint panel discussion of the First and Fourth Committees on challenges to space security and sustainability. ASEAN also expressed concern regarding space debris, which posed a serious risk for communication, as well as for all peoples and industries that relied on space technologies. The Scientific and Technical Subcommittee should continue to discuss mitigation measures, while States should implement the Space Debris Mitigation Guidelines of COPUOS on a voluntary basis.

13. Steps taken by ASEAN to forge closer regional cooperation in the field of space technology included support for the establishment of the ASEAN Research and Training Centre for Space Technology and Applications, which served as a resource hub for capability, research, development, and academic study. ASEAN had also hosted a number of regional and international conferences and workshops on outer space, and the new research centre had already offered five international training courses focused on the peaceful uses of space technology and space exploration.

14. Speaking in her national capacity, she underscored that international cooperation in space activities was crucial to ensure that outer space was used peacefully and for the benefit of all humanity. International cooperation regarding the peaceful use of outer space should be inclusive, taking levels of technological development, especially of non-spacefaring nations, into account. The Committee had a vital role to play in connecting such countries with more advanced spacefaring nations to enhance capacity-building. It was important to establish the boundary between airspace and outer space in order to achieve legal certainty for the implementation of air and space law respectively. Her delegation shared the concern that no consensus had yet been reached on the matter.

15. Equitable access to the geostationary-satellite orbit should furthermore be guaranteed to all States, taking account of the special needs of developing countries and the geographical situation of certain countries. She expressed appreciation for the tireless search for compromise solutions with a view to

finalizing the draft Guidelines on the long-term sustainability of outer space activities.

16. Indonesia had taken several measures to strengthen its space activities legislation and was cooperating with the aeronautical institutions of other countries. Her delegation reiterated its belief that outer space should be solely used for peaceful purposes, for the benefit of all humankind. Sustainability in that regard could only be achieved through the development of space technology, coupled with good intentions based on fair and mutual benefit and respect for the territorial integrity and sovereignty of States.

17. **Mr. Lenoir** (Observer for the European Union), speaking also on behalf of the candidate countries Montenegro, Serbia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and Turkey; the stabilization and association process country Bosnia and Herzegovina; and, in addition, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, said that the European Union and its member States had developed significant capacities in global navigation and earth observation, space research and space sustainability. Outer space was a global common good that should be used peacefully for the benefit of all humanity.

18. As had been recognized in the 2016 European Space Strategy, the space economy was an important source of jobs and economic growth; space applications could moreover make a significant contribution to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Countries should work together to ensure that the potential of space was mobilized to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. Consequently, the European Union had made the data from its Galileo and Copernicus programmes freely available. All end users around the world should be able to effectively use space applications to improve food production and pest control, broaden the reach of health and education services, monitor and combat pollution and climate change and combat organized crime, which were targets included in various Goals.

19. The European Union therefore welcomed the efforts of the Office for Outer Space Affairs with regard to its innovative approach to capacity-building and the proposal to create a space solutions compendium of available space applications and space development profiles for identifying gaps on a country-by-country basis.

20. Given that space activities could contribute to disaster management and response, including early warnings for extreme weather events, and that reliable maps derived from satellite images helped humanitarian actors and civil protection authorities to optimize their response to natural and man-made disasters, the European Union supported close cooperation and coordination with all international partners, including the United Nations Platform for Space-based Information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response (UN-SPIDER).

21. Space had a growing importance in daily life; the international community should not underestimate the crucial need to collectively ensure that space remained a safe, secure and sustainable environment that could be used on an equitable and mutually acceptable basis and for peaceful purposes. International cooperation should be urgently increased on a number of issues; it was hoped that UNISPACE+50 would provide a concrete action agenda in that regard. The international community must tackle the potential dangers of extreme space weather events, orbital debris, potentially destructive collisions and the deliberate disruption or destruction of satellites. The European Union would continue to work on transparency and confidence-building measures. Its long-term goals included increasing international cooperation in space, establishing standards of responsible behaviour across the full range of space activity, developing commitments to non-interference in the peaceful exploration and use of outer space, facilitating equitable access to outer space, and increasing the transparency of space activities.

22. **Mr. Al Habib** (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that his delegation attached great importance to outer space as a common heritage of humankind, and to its exploration and use by all States for peaceful purposes solely on the basis of equality and the principle of non-ownership, and irrespective of their level of economic or scientific development. To ensure that outer space was reserved for peaceful activities, all plans for the militarization or weaponization of outer space must be rejected. It was therefore important to adopt a universal, non-discriminatory and comprehensive approach to space activities; all proposals regarding outer space should be pursued within the competent United Nations bodies and should seek consensus approval.

23. His country fully supported UN-SPIDER as a platform to ensure that all countries, especially developing countries, could access space-based information and apply space technologies for disaster and risk management. The UN-SPIDER Regional Support Office in Iran therefore strove to strengthen the platform and enhance regional and international cooperation in the service of all countries, especially those most at risk of natural disasters. His country had hosted an international workshop in collaboration with the United Nations aimed at raising awareness of space

technologies and promoting their use to monitor droughts and sand and dust storms in the Middle East and in developing countries more generally.

24. Space technology would be essential for the successful implementation of the 2030 Agenda, as it provided data, information and services that could contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and to the monitoring of progress in implementing the Agenda. In that regard, Iran underscored the important role of the United Nations Programme on Space Applications, which helped Member States build capacity regarding the use of space science and technology and space applications in support of sustainable development.

25. The mandate of COPUOS would only be fulfilled when all the draft Guidelines had been agreed upon by all members and presented to the General Assembly for adoption. Iran therefore emphasized the right of all COPUOUS members to present proposals and amendments to the draft Guidelines before the end of formal negotiations in the Committee. The fact that a partial set of guidelines had been appended to the previous year's report contained in document A/71/20 had not changed the provisional status of the Guidelines, which were still under review.

26. **Mr. García Moritán** (Argentina) said that his Government recognized the sovereign right of all States to participate in the exploration and use of outer space for exclusively peaceful purposes that benefited human development. It was therefore firmly committed to the principles laid down in that regard, in particular those concerning equal access to outer space for all, without discrimination or regard for degrees of development; non-appropriation of outer space, including the Moon and other celestial bodies, by any State under any pretext; non-militarization of outer space and its use, as the common heritage of humanity, strictly for enhancing living conditions and peace on Earth; and regional and international cooperation in the development of space activities.

27. Greater cooperation for capacity-building was indeed fundamental to enabling developing countries in particular to benefit from the scientific, environmental, medical and educational advances achieved through space activities and the use of space technology. Such cooperation also promoted the exchange of knowledge and good practices, created synergies and increased awareness of the benefits of space activities. Respect for the instruments and laws in place to prevent an arms race in outer space was similarly crucial, and welcome progress on the peaceful uses of outer space had been accomplished by the Working Group on the Long-term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities. Argentina reiterated the vital importance of adopting clear terminology to convey the message that the weaponization of outer space was unlawful.

28. In view of the growing use of outer space, other aspects meriting close follow-up included the saturation of the geostationary orbit, debris management and the use of nuclear energy in low-Earth orbits. The issue of the long-term sustainability of outer space activities, however, must under no circumstances be used by established spacefaring nations as an argument for placing restrictions on emerging space nations legitimately working to develop and use space technology in order to improve living standards for their citizens.

29. International cooperation in space activities was crucial for the Latin American and Caribbean region, not least because space tools played an increasing role in disaster prevention, management and mitigation, as well as in water resources management and climate change mitigation. Technological progress and the involvement of new private actors had enormously accelerated the exploration and use of outer space, making it urgent for COPUOS to be creative in taking up new topics for discussion, in conjunction with the various other forums dealing with outer space issues. His delegation welcomed the upcoming joint panel discussion between the First and Fourth Committees on the issue of space security and sustainability.

30. The fiftieth anniversary of UNISPACE was an opportunity to reflect on the achievements of over fifty years of space exploration and look towards the future, developing a "Space 2030" agenda to strengthen the contribution of space applications and tools in support of global sustainable development.

31. **Mr. Kanjana-Oransiri** (Thailand) said that as an active member of COPUOUS, his country was committed to preventing an arms race or the potential weaponization of outer space, ensuring that outer space was used peacefully for the benefit of all. His delegation therefore welcomed the upcoming joint panel discussion between the First and Fourth Committees.

32. Space technology and its applications provided evidence-based data that held great potential for implementing the 2030 Agenda and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030. Recognizing the immense benefits of space technology for sustainable development, his Government had applied space-derived data to water and land management, as well as to expanded access to education through distance learning. Thailand had also improved agricultural efficiency and effectiveness using

geo-informatics and had integrated space technology applications into its national disaster risk management, early warning systems and search and rescue operations.

33. International frameworks were necessary to ensure that outer space was reserved for peaceful uses, and any further developments in international space law must be transparent and inclusive of all relevant actors. To commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the Outer Space Treaty, his Government was drafting a space affairs regulation bill in accordance with the Treaty and the Agreement on the Rescue of Astronauts, the Return of Astronauts and the Return of Objects Launched into Outer Space, to which Thailand was also party. His country was also drafting a comprehensive national space strategy that included a focus on space technology in the service of sustainable development. National initiatives also included capacity-building in terms of space technology, geo-informatics operations, space business development and knowledge transfer.

34. The international community must address the significant gaps in space technology advancement between developed and developing countries, ensuring knowledge sharing and the non-discriminatory transfer of technology. Regional cooperation should also address gaps in financial, technical and institutional capacity. In that regard, Thailand was home to the ASEAN Research and Training Centre for Space Technology and Applications, and provided data to the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific regional space applications programme for sustainable development to support disaster response. The country also participated in the data-sharing and service platform for the Asia-Pacific Space Cooperation Organization. Effective early warning systems were vital to reduce disaster risks and save lives; UN-SPIDER should therefore expand its scope of work to the Asia-Pacific region.

35. **Mr. Rosenblit** (Israel) said that Israel was among the few countries with a space-launch capability, operating some 1,200 active satellites. As a member of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS), it reiterated the need for the work of COPUOS to remain apolitical. His Government had concluded agreements with the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs and stood ready to support the Office's activities, including preparations for UNISPACE+50 and for the era of suborbital flights in cooperation with the International Civil Aviation Organization. Cooperation agreements had also been signed with sister agencies by the Israeli Space Agency, which additionally continued to expand links with international partners and had sought to advance projects of benefit to the international community, including through the Israeli collaboration with UN-SPIDER, to which it provided scientific and Earth observation imagery, and the Israeli membership in the Space Mission Planning Advisory Group, seeking ways to avert near-Earth object impact threats.

36. The Israeli private sector was developing new space- and satellite-based applications and seeking opportunities for cooperation. To that end, his country had hosted a number of conferences, including its annual international space conference. In cooperation with France, Israel had launched the Venus satellite, which was capable of exploring geological, seismic and bio-diversity-related changes using innovative technologies. As an innovative solution to food insecurity, the satellite contributed to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Free of borders and territorial divisions but not without its dangers, space offered the opportunity to embark on a process of collective discovery leading to heightened understanding and tolerance.

37. **Ms. Scott** (Namibia) said that Namibia continued to support the implementation of the African Space Policy and Strategy adopted by the African Union Assembly of Heads of State and Government in 2016 within the framework of the African Union Agenda 2063. Her Government also endorsed the call for the regulation of space debris through a register of objects launched into space. The Outer Space Treaty was of utmost significance in rallying collective efforts to serve the shared interests of humankind. Outer space had important contributions to make in addressing the interconnected nature of global weather patterns and their potentially devastating impact on global communications systems. In particular, risk management in the area of epidemiology surveillance could help reduce the impact of tropical diseases.

38. As a country with two large deserts, Namibia was keen to utilize all available forms of technology to address the risks of desertification and to implement the 2030 Agenda. It was important for developing countries to participate fully in the development of technology facilitating the peaceful use of outer space. To that end, it was crucial to guarantee access to information and to facilitate the sharing of knowledge in support of decision-making at all levels. Countries must work together to protect the environment on earth and in outer space and to prevent the weaponization of the latter.

39. **Mr. Elshandawily** (Egypt) said that States must work together to ensure that the exploration and use of outer space, as the common heritage of mankind, were for exclusively peaceful purposes and for the benefit of all countries, irrespective of their degree of economic

and scientific development. In the light of recent technological developments, the legal gaps left by the Outer Space Treaty must be filled by new legally-binding instruments in order to deter further militarization of outer space and prevent its weaponization. Egypt therefore supported the negotiation in the Conference on Disarmament of a legally-binding instrument on the prevention of an arms race in outer space. Transparency- and confidence-building measures, while important, did not obviate the need to reinforce the existing international regime on outer space.

40. His country intended to establish a national space agency in order to develop a space industry that would contribute to sustainable development, coordinate peaceful space activities and develop international partnerships in the area of space technology. The agency would also train Egyptian personnel and support innovation and research and development in the area of space technology, in conjunction with universities and research centres.

41. **Ms. Archinard** (Switzerland) said that the use of space for peaceful purposes had evolved in an increasingly democratic manner, benefiting a growing number of people worldwide. However, alarming increases in space debris over the previous decade were the corollary to those positive developments. New precautions must therefore be taken when conducting operations in outer space. Switzerland welcomed the efforts of COPUOS to establish guidelines for the long-term sustainability of outer space activities. It also called on the States involved in that process to endeavour to reach consensus by 2018 on the text of the draft guidelines and on the working group report on the subject, in the hope that the conclusion of that work would prompt a majority of States to engage on the issue.

42. Of the seven thematic priorities identified by COPUOS for the UNISPACE+50 commemorative conference in 2018, the application of space technologies to global health and enhanced information exchange on space objects and events were of particular importance to her Government. It had organized a conference on the former subject and had proposed a candidate to chair a new working group on the latter.

43. **Ms. Rodríguez de Febres-Cordero** (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) said that it was crucial to ensure that all nations had equal access to outer space as the common heritage of mankind. To that end, COPUOS and its Subcommittees provided the only platform for countries to cooperate actively and constructively on space-related activities. The geostationary orbit, which was a limited natural resource at risk of saturation that should be used in accordance with the principle of rational and equitable access for all States, bearing in mind their needs and the interests of developing countries. Outer space must be used only for peaceful ends and to promote the well-being of all nations, irrespective of their level of development, in line with international law and the principle of non-appropriation of outer space, including the moon and other celestial bodies.

44. She reiterated the need for all States to refrain from taking actions aimed at the militarization of outer space, including the placement of weapons in outer space. In order to contain the threat to peace and security posed by an outer space arms race, the international community must negotiate a new, legally-binding international agreement that enshrined the principles of equity, viability and verification. To that end, her delegation welcomed the draft treaty proposed by China and the Russian Federation concerning the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space, as a solid basis for the launch of negotiations leading to the conclusion of a legally-binding instrument that would safeguard outer space as a peaceful realm to the benefit of humankind. The use of spy satellites to intercept communications contravened the principle of the peaceful use of outer space and violated the sovereignty of States. Countries' space-related initiatives should focus on the potential contribution of space technologies to sustainable development. The removal and reduction of space debris must be addressed in a manner that neither hindered measures taken to strengthen the capacities of developing countries nor unduly burdened their space programmes.

45. Given the vital role of international cooperation in fostering outer space activities to improve human life, industrialized nations should pool their resources to assist developing countries in implementing space programmes. Her Government attached great importance to the development of national policies aimed at fostering the peaceful use of outer space. To that end, the Bolivarian Agency for Space Activities had been established to consolidate research and development programmes that would make it possible to incorporate the use of space technology into decision-making in the Venezuelan public sector. The Agency had participated in COPUOS meetings.

46. Cooperation programmes developed with the Government of China had led to the successful launches of three satellites, designated "Simón Bolívar", "Francisco de Miranda" and "Antonio José de Sucre". Recent natural disasters underscored the important role of earth observation technologies in collecting

information of value to emergency response efforts. Her country supported the use of space technologies to that end. To conclude, she reiterated the commitment of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to joining international efforts optimally to use and derive benefit from outer space for peaceful purposes.

47. **Ms. Mohd Taib** (Malaysia) said that Malaysia adhered fully to the United Nations legal instruments on outer space and to the principles enshrined in them concerning equal and non-discriminatory access to outer space and use of outer space for strictly peaceful purposes. Her country's National Space Policy 2030 had been endorsed by its National Science Council earlier that year. Serving as the basis for regulating space-related activities, the policy highlighted the commitment of Malaysia to enact outer space legislation in order to ratify the treaties on outer space. Key priorities outlined in the policy included capacity-building in global navigation, satellite communication and earth observation systems.

48. The commercialization of outer space and the involvement of the private sector in its use raised a number of legal questions surrounding sovereignty, hence the need to consider the definition and delimitation of outer space seriously. When drafting its national outer space legislation, her Government had faced legal uncertainty about the applicability of air and space law as a result of the lack of a common definition and delimitation of outer space.

49. Space technology was being harnessed to address a variety of social, economic and environmental challenges, with applications ranging from infrastructure planning to disaster risk reduction. The contributions of various States, which had established space-related international cooperation programmes and projects with Malaysia, and international initiatives for cooperation on specific aspects of the exploration and use of outer space had helped her country promote the domestic use of space applications. Malaysia stood ready to strengthen the international framework governing the sustainable use of outer space for peaceful purposes.

50. **Ms. Sayed** (Pakistan) said that as a member of COPUOS, Pakistan was committed to universal access to outer space on an equal and non-discriminatory basis, as well as the non-appropriation of outer space by claim of sovereignty, use, appropriation or other means, and the exclusive use of outer space for peaceful purposes. Space technologies had evolved dramatically, taking on practical applications for national security and improving socio-economic conditions. COPUOS had a vital role to play in helping developing nations build their capacity in space-related activities in order to make those activities sustainable over the long term and to build confidence and foster transparency. Doing so would require ensuring access to space-derived data and information and the processing thereof, along with access to participation in space-related activities and operations.

51. With the risk of weaponization of outer space applications on the rise, urgent steps must be taken to prevent outer space from emerging as a new theatre of conflict. Pakistan consistently opposed the militarization and weaponization of outer space; the placement of weapons in space imperilled the future of the planet and the long-term sustainability of space operations.

52. Her delegation supported the recommendations of the Group of Governmental Experts on Transparency and Confidence-building Measures in Outer Space as non-legally binding voluntary measures. Pakistan had been stepping up its participation in space-related activities, including by training experts in the area of space law; considering an upgrade of its Institute of Space Technology to enable it to join the United Nations-affiliated international network of regional centres for space science and technology education; and developing the Space Vision 2040 strategy for the effective application of space-based technologies for sustainable development.

53. **Mr. Li** Yongsheng (China) said that despite the numerous challenges presented by the vigorous development of outer space activities, States should continue to abide by the Outer Space Treaty as the cornerstone of the international legal regime for outer space. Ahead of the fiftieth anniversary of the UNISPACE I conference, to be marked by the UNISPACE+50 conference in 2018, China stood ready to forge consensus with the membership of COPUOS and achieve substantive results in the work related to the commemorative activities. Consultations on the guidelines for the long-term sustainability of outer space activities were in their final, critical stage. His Government would continue to participate actively in the negotiations. In that connection, it reiterated that the negotiation process should include a review of the existing practical measures and strike a proper balance between free and equitable use of outer space and sound, orderly development of space activities, taking into account the concerns of different States.

54. China had successfully conducted several launch missions, including those of a new generation of carrier rockets, and its BeiDou Navigation System had steadily expanded its global network to provide better navigation

and positioning services in cooperation with other satellite navigation systems. His Government's white paper on outer space activities contained plans and policy proposals for developing the country's space activities over the following five years, including steadily upgrading the Chinese space industry and implementing major projects with a view to establishing a basic system of space infrastructure.

55. The Government had continuously expanded international exchanges and cooperation in the field of outer space to promote benefit-sharing in human space activities. It had hosted the Global Space Exploration Congress in June 2017 and had invited the representatives of a number of countries and the Director of the United Nations Office of Outer Space Affairs to observe a launch in Hainan, China.

56. At the multilateral level, the Government strongly supported activities within the United Nations system for the peaceful uses of outer space, was actively facilitating the construction of the Space Information Corridor under the Belt and Road Initiative, promoted the construction of remote-sensing satellite constellations along with other BRIC countries' space agencies, and supported the Asia-Pacific Space Cooperation Organization (APSCO) in building joint, multi-tasking small-satellite constellations. In accordance with the International Charter on Space and Major Disasters, it had provided satellite data support for major disaster relief to space agencies in numerous countries.

57. The United Nations-affiliated Regional Centre for Space Science and Technology Education in Asia and the Pacific at Beihang University of Aeronautics and Astronautics had enrolled students from 16 countries on Government-funded scholarships and held short-term training sessions for participants from 43 countries. Since 2014, the Centre's specialized training programmes had produced advanced degree holders in space law and space technology

58. The Government firmly opposed the weaponization of outer space and the arms race. It strongly supported negotiations for an international treaty that would eliminate security threats and ensure exclusively peaceful uses of outer space. United Nations space agencies should take steps to strengthen coordination in order to strike a balance between the security and sustainable use of outer space and thus better manage the new risks and challenges it posed. China was ready to work with other countries to advance outer space activities in the interest of economic development and social progress.

59. **Mr. Mendoza-García** (Costa Rica) said that outer space activities should be conducted in a manner that allowed all States to develop their space programmes for peaceful purposes, given the requisite technical capacities. Stressing the importance of the principle of non-appropriation of space, including the moon and other celestial bodies, he called on COPUOS to undertake discussions on the legal mechanisms needed to guarantee the proper use of space resources. Capacity building, training and education on space affairs were vital to advancing national, regional and international initiatives to continue developing space science and technology in countries taking their first steps in that area. The United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs should therefore explore cooperation agreements with national centres of learning and inter-regional organizations in order to promote relevant training programmes.

60. Space technology had enormous potential to benefit both developed and developing countries and thereby to contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. His delegation supported the establishment of guidelines for the long-term sustainability of outer space activities and looked forward to the adoption of the guidelines at the landmark UNISPACE+50 conference in 2018.

61. At a time when some countries had clearly outpaced many others in space exploration, it must be borne in mind that outer space was the common heritage of humankind, hence the need to protect that realm from the environmental impact of outer space activities and exercise the same caution that characterized environmental protection efforts on earth. In closing, his delegation welcomed the important work of the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs to promote gender equity in outer space activities.

The meeting rose at 12:10 p.m.