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Chair: Mr. Kemayah, Sr. (Liberia)
later: Mr. O'Toole (Vice-Chair) (Ireland)

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The meeting was called to order at 3 p.m.

Agenda item 53: International cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space (A/73/20)

1. **The Chair** said that space science, technology, law and policy were becoming increasingly important in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The high-level segment of the Conference commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of the first United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE+50) had been held while the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS) had been in session in June 2018, and the development of a “Space2030” agenda was now underway. In order for space to be a driver of sustainable development, there must be international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space, particularly for the benefit of developing countries.

2. **Ms. Ramirez de Arellano y Haro** (Mexico), speaking as Chair of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS) and introducing the report on its sixty-first session (A/73/20), said that, with the addition of Bahrain, Denmark and Norway, COPUOS now had 87 members. The European Science Foundation and the University Space Engineering Consortium-Global had also become permanent observers. The growing membership confirmed both the increasing importance attached to international cooperation in outer space activities, and the essential role of COPUOS as a key platform for the global governance of outer space activities and the maintenance of outer space for peaceful purposes. The UNISPACE+50 high-level segment, which had been open to all States Members of the United Nations, had been held during the sixty-first session of COPUOS.

3. The year 2018 also marked the fifty-fifth anniversary of the space mission undertaken by cosmonaut Valentina Tereshkova, the first woman in space. The international community must promote gender equality and the empowerment of women and encourage greater participation and representation of women in leadership roles, not only in space exploration but in all areas of space economy, space society, space accessibility and space diplomacy. She would continue to work with the Office for Outer Space Affairs to eliminate discriminatory practices and to promote the advancement of women through capacity-building and employment in space science, technology, law and policy.

4. COPUOS and its Subcommittees continued to work towards achieving consensus on a number of important, sensitive issues relating to the global

governance, safety, security and sustainability of outer space activities, including those that were vital to emerging space nations and developing countries. UNISPACE+50 had sparked discussion on creating new guidelines for global governance and allowed COPUOS, its subsidiary bodies and the Office for Outer Space Affairs to respond to new realities, opportunities and challenges in outer space. It had also provided support for the broader efforts of the Secretary-General to enhance the contributions of space in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, by taking a unique cross-sectoral approach to space science, technology, policy and law and the shaping of a “Space2030” agenda. Global development continued to rely 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 the successful creation of a “Space2030” agenda, which in turn would be crucial in meeting the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and implementing the Goals.

5. International cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space continued to provide impetus for future international arrangements relating to space cooperation and coordination at the national, regional, interregional and international levels. All States must participate in addressing space-related challenges, and she was confident that the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space would take action to substantially improve the safety, security and sustainability of outer space activities for current and future generations.

6. **Ms. Krisnamurthi** (Indonesia), speaking on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), said that the Association remained committed to working closely with COPUOS and the Office for Outer Space Affairs and welcomed the applications for membership submitted by Cyprus, Ethiopia, Finland, Mauritius and Paraguay.

7. Outer space must be used and explored for exclusively peaceful purposes for the benefit of all countries, irrespective of the degree of their economic or scientific development, and in accordance with international law and the principle of non-appropriation of outer space. The UNISPACE+50 high-level segment had provided an opportunity to reflect on the progress achieved in global space activities since 1999 and to determine a future direction for global space cooperation. ASEAN believed that the Working Group on the “Space2030” Agenda, as it developed the agenda and an implementation plan, should be guided by the seven thematic priorities of UNISPACE+50 and the four

pillars of space economy, space society, space accessibility and space diplomacy.

8. Member States should expand their cooperation in the exploration and peaceful uses of outer space and build stronger partnerships to integrate space cooperation with economic and development cooperation. They must also bridge the technological divide between developed and developing countries to enable all States to implement global initiatives, including the 2030 Agenda, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 and the Paris Agreement on climate change. COPUOS was the ideal platform for promoting international cooperation to provide technical assistance to developing countries in space-related activities, and the regional centres for space science and technology education, affiliated to the United Nations, should be enhanced in that regard. Member States should reaffirm the important role of COPUOS, its Subcommittees and the Office for Outer Space Affairs as the primary intergovernmental platforms for discussion of space issues, including space governance, and ensure that those bodies were equipped with the necessary resources. The United Nations Platform for Space-based Information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response (UN-SPIDER) should be reinforced as well.

9. Given that Southeast Asia was prone to many natural disasters, ASEAN attached great importance to the use of space technologies for disaster risk reduction, preparedness, response and mitigation. Such technologies could improve early warning systems and enable more effective search and rescue operations. In fact, the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management had incorporated space technologies in its disaster management and response system.

10. Steps taken by ASEAN to forge closer regional cooperation included the establishment of the ASEAN Research and Training Centre for Space Technology and Applications, to serve as a regional resource hub for capability and research development and academic study. Lastly, ASEAN supported efforts to strengthen the outer space governance framework in an inclusive manner consistent with applicable legal regimes.

11. Speaking in her national capacity, she said that international cooperation in space activities was crucial to ensure the peaceful use of outer space for the benefit of all humanity, and the major spacefaring nations had the responsibility to prevent an arms race in outer space. Such cooperation should be inclusive and take into account levels of technological development, especially of non-spacefaring nations. COPUOS played a vital role

in connecting such countries with more advanced spacefaring nations to enhance their space capacity.

12. It was important to establish the boundary between airspace and outer space in order to achieve legal certainty in the implementation of air and space law respectively. Her delegation hoped that work on the set of agreed guidelines finalized by the Working Group on the Long-term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities in 2018 would be carried forward without delay. Furthermore, equitable access to the geostationary orbit should be guaranteed to all States, taking account of the special needs of developing countries and the geographical position of certain countries.

13. Indonesia had done much to strengthen its legislation governing space activities, recently by passing regulations on procedures for remote sensing. Sustainability could be achieved only when States had good intentions in developing space technology. Indonesia had benefited from the use of outer space to achieve Sustainable Development Goals in disaster management, health, education, economic growth and use of the sea.

Mr. O'Toole (Ireland), Vice-Chair, took the Chair.

14. **Mr. Dabouis** (Observer for the European Union), speaking also on behalf of the candidate countries Albania, 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 space activities and technologies contributed to addressing major challenges such as climate change, disaster management, food security, transport development, environmental protection, migration, mobility and energy security. They also boosted competitiveness in industries beyond the space sector, driving economic growth and innovation for the general good, and increasingly played a role in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. The European Union and its member States therefore strongly supported the work of COPUOS and would actively participate in developing a “Space2030” agenda that safeguarded the long-term sustainability of outer space activities and the safety and operational stability of space itself.

15. Together, the European Union, its member States and the European Space Agency had the second largest budget for space in the world. The European Union sought to be an autonomous and cooperative space actor. Twenty-two satellites had already been launched under the Galileo programme, a state-of-the-art global satellite navigation system that provided a highly accurate global positioning service under civilian control. When fully

operational in 2020, the system would improve in-car navigation, road and maritime transport management, search and rescue, banking security, electricity supply and other services. The European Union also funded the European Geostationary Navigation Overlay Service, which supported several market segments, including aviation, road, rail and maritime transport, surveying and mapping, and precision agriculture. Furthermore, data from Copernicus, the long-term Earth observation and monitoring programme comprising seven Sentinel satellites offering services in the fields of monitoring, climate change, emergency management and security, were freely available to all users. Copernicus had perhaps the best rapid mapping system in the world and could produce accurate maps to assess damage and plan for rescue operations in a matter of hours. The European Union was keen to use the programme to help countries in emergency situations, as it had done in the Caribbean for Hurricane Irma.

16. Space technologies, infrastructure, services and data provided the tools needed to address societal challenges and global concerns. Space research and innovation were therefore an important part of the European Union's Horizon 2020 programme, which would mainstream international cooperation as far as possible. In order to bring the benefits of space to citizens and unlock its potential to stimulate growth, it was necessary to promote its integration into societies and economies, ensure its safety and security and foster competitiveness. Space exploration must benefit all humanity and be open to partnerships between spacefaring nations and newcomers. On a geopolitical level, exploring the solar system had the potential to foster cooperative international relations, as demonstrated by the International Space Station. Space exploration must also be without borders, building on a common high-level political ambition and undertaken with a rules-based approach. The European Space Agency played a key role in robotic and human exploration and in fundamental space science.

17. While extreme space weather events could disrupt the operation of space assets and critical infrastructure on which all had come to depend, there appeared to be limited awareness of those risks and limited preparedness to cope with the effects. Following on UNISPACE+50, the international community should consider how to improve cooperation in that regard. All stakeholders, including the wider public, should be made more aware of space weather events and their consequences. Authorities should categorize them as natural hazards, and operators of space infrastructure and services should invest in more resilient systems. Furthermore, a multi-risk governance approach should

be defined and adopted at the regional or international level in order to assess hidden vulnerabilities and interdependencies, address cascading effects and prepare strategic plans.

18. The increasingly complex space arena required clear rules and a forum in which dialogue was possible and consensus could be reached. In that context, COPUOS and the Office for Outer Space Affairs should continue to play a unique role.

19. **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 in the interest of all humanity, and firmly adhered to the principles laid down in that regard. International cooperation was essential to ensuring that all States had equal access to outer space, without discrimination. Space technology and its applications were contributing to sustainable development by providing data that improved knowledge and allowed for more effective action plans to be drafted on issues relating to the environment, climate change, biodiversity, seismic risk, natural resources and disaster risk reduction.

20. In view of the increasing use of outer space, issues such as the saturation of the geostationary orbit, space debris management, the use of nuclear energy or placement of nuclear weapons in Earth orbits and an arms race in outer space could affect the sustainability of space activities and required close attention. His delegation welcomed the consensus reached by the Working Group on the Long-term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities, but the agreed guidelines should not be used by countries with a tradition of space technology to restrict others that legitimately aspired to develop and use space technology to improve the lives of their citizens. The Group of Governmental Experts on Further Practical Measures for the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space had met for the first time earlier in the year and its conclusions and recommendations ought to provide a good basis for further discussion.

21. In 2016, Argentina's National Commission for Space Activities had drafted the space plan 2016–2027, and in October 2018 had launched the SAOCOM A1 satellite carrying the latest Earth-observation technology, which could be used to prevent, monitor, mitigate and evaluate natural and human-made disasters. It could also be applied to other areas of strategic interest, including agriculture, security and defence, that would benefit countries in the region. Argentina was engaged in a number of international cooperation programmes with space agencies in Brazil,

China, Italy, the United States of America and other countries, as well as the European Space Agency. Those initiatives reflected his country's commitment to promote international and intraregional cooperation in sharing knowledge and best practices and building capacity at the national and regional levels.

22. The UNISPACE+50 high-level segment had provided an opportunity to reflect on the achievements made in space exploration in the past 50 years and to look towards the future.

23. **Mr. Devahastin Na Ayuthai** (Thailand) said that preventing an arms race in outer space and the weaponization of outer space must remain a top priority. As an active member of COPUOS, his delegation was committed to ensuring that outer space was used peacefully for the benefit of all. International cooperation was needed to develop transparent, inclusive international frameworks in the field. Additionally, space debris mitigation and remediation must be part of the discussion to promote responsible, peaceful and safe uses of outer space. In order to manage and protect its interests in space, his Government was currently drafting legislation to regulate its space affairs, particularly Earth observation, space-based communication, space exploration, space industry and space awareness.

24. Space science and technology and their applications played a significant role in implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. As an emerging spacefaring nation, Thailand was leveraging space technologies to achieve key development priorities, focusing on the use of Earth observation satellites, capacity-building and integrated geo-information platforms, and had already enhanced its capacities for disaster risk reduction, early warning systems and search and rescue operations. As a focal point of the Regional Space Applications Programme for Sustainable Development created by the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, Thailand provided data from its Earth observation satellite to assist in disaster responses in the entire region.

25. The international community must address the significant gap in advances in space technology between developed and developing countries. The non-discriminatory transfer of technology and knowledge sharing were unquestionably the key. Thailand was home to the regional ASEAN Research and Training Centre for Space Technology and Applications, and looked forward to working closely with all Southeast Asian partners and counterparts to further strengthen its capacity.

26. The Second Thailand Earth Observation System (THEOS-2), to be launched in 2020, was a major milestone in the development of his nation's space-based industry, and would be used to monitor pollution and natural hazards and to support water management, disaster management, national security and urban and economic development. It would be among the first projects to utilize big data, data analytics and deep learning methods to promote social and economic sustainability. For the project, Thai engineers would develop an integrated geo-information system, a ground segment and two Earth observation satellites.

27. Outer space could play a unique role in advancing modern societies, and international collaboration was key to the success of any space programme or activity. As a result, the international community had a shared responsibility to improve cooperation so that outer space could serve as a meaningful and dynamic vehicle of social and economic growth for all.

28. **Mr. Misra** (India) said that international cooperation helped to make the costs and risks of outer space programmes more manageable by pooling scientific expertise, experience and institutional capacities for research purposes. There were also a number of private entities operating in outer space for mainly commercial reasons, including space tourism and space resource mining. Growing dependence on space-based systems required uninterrupted services and protection from threats such as space debris, space weather, weaponization and cyberthreats. The international community must collaborate to establish relevant norms, especially given the interface between the use of outer space for peaceful purposes and national security challenges.

29. India was a spacefaring nation with a long-standing, well-established and highly cost-effective space programme that had focused primarily on meeting development needs, even though it had launched successful missions to the Moon and Mars. It used satellite-based applications for remote sensing and telecommunications, especially to benefit remote areas, and in order to map and survey natural resources, water, crops and soil; monitor and predict natural disasters; and provide television, telemedicine and tele-education. The satellites also provided positioning, navigation and timing services for several applications.

30. The Indian Space Research Organization was working with all branches of the Government to enhance the use of space applications in governance and sustainable development, and legislation was being drafted to enhance private sector participation in compliance with international treaty obligations. India

continued to collaborate with international partners on space programmes like satellite launches, and to share some of the benefits with non-spacefaring nations so as to promote their development and build their human resource and institutional capacities. His Government had nearly 200 formal cooperation agreements with approximately 50 countries and several international bodies, including recent agreements with Algeria, Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Oman and South Africa. In addition, India assisted neighbouring countries in surveying efforts for crop inventory, forest mapping, drought monitoring and urban sprawl. In 2017, it had launched a satellite to allow South Asian nations to use its telecommunication services, and an agreement had been signed to set up a ground station in Viet Nam for ASEAN member States.

31. At the recent UNISPACE+50 high-level segment, India had announced plans to create a capacity building programme in partnership with the Office for Outer Space Affairs to allow fellow developing countries to assemble, integrate and test nanosatellites. Furthermore, India had recently hosted the thirty-eighth Asian Conference on Remote Sensing and sessions of the Asia-Pacific Regional Space Agency Forum and the Coordination Group for Meteorological Satellites. The Indian Space Research Organization continued to share its facilities and expertise through the United Nations-affiliated Centre for Space Science and Technology Education in Asia and the Pacific, with approximately 1,600 beneficiaries in over 50 countries to date.

32. India was a founding member of COPUOS and a party to the five United Nations treaties on outer space. His Government supported efforts to build mutual trust and confidence. It had, for instance, taken part in discussions on the long-term sustainability of outer space activities within COPUOS and the prevention of an arms race within the Conference on Disarmament, and adopted a number of transparency and confidence-building measures, including the registration of space objects, pre-launch notifications, space debris management, space object proximity awareness and collision avoidance analysis. It had hosted several national and international workshops and seminars on those issues to promote capacity-building in space law. His Government looked forward to working with partners to ensure the long-term sustainability of outer space activities through meaningful international cooperation.

33. **Mr. Favre** (Switzerland) said that UNISPACE+50 had brought together a wide range of stakeholders from the space community. His delegation fully supported the adoption of draft resolution [A/73/L.6](#), entitled “Fiftieth anniversary of the first United Nations Conference on

the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space: space as a driver of sustainable development”, in which Member States highlighted the valuable contribution of space technologies in addressing global challenges, called for stronger international cooperation and tasked COPUOS with developing a “Space2030” agenda. That initiative would strengthen the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, as well as global governance of space activities. Space technologies were essential to sustainable development. Switzerland remained strongly committed to improving global health through the use of digital technologies, particularly satellites, which could be used to provide telemedicine and to monitor environmental factors conducive to spreading epidemics.

34. While the Working Group on the Long-term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities had, in a major accomplishment crowning years of intensive negotiations, finalized nine additional consensus guidelines, work should continue in order to improve mutual understanding and exchanges of information among spacefaring nations and to make space activities more secure. The space and disarmament communities must continue to engage in dialogue on space security and the long-term sustainability of space activities. His delegation therefore supported holding another joint meeting of the First and Fourth Committees in 2019. Lastly, Switzerland supported the five States that had applied for membership in COPUOS and looked forward to serving on the Bureau and the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee in 2020 and 2021.

35. **Mr. Zaayman** (South Africa) said that the benefits of outer space must be accessible to all countries, not just those with a space programme. The “Space2030” agenda called for at the conclusion of the UNISPACE+50 process should therefore include initiatives and programmes designed to bridge the space divide, make space available to everyone and facilitate international cooperation in space exploration and innovation. The use of outer space would be essential to implementing the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development and addressing the triple challenges facing many developing countries in Africa: poverty, inequality and unemployment. South Africa was therefore committed to participating actively in the meetings of the Working Group on the “Space2030” Agenda.

36. His delegation called on all Member States to implement the 21 voluntary guidelines and preamble that had been finalized by the Working Group on the Long-term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities, in what should be recognized as a historic agreement. Nevertheless, the outstanding issues that had not been

included in the agreed guidelines must be addressed by COPUOS in the future in order to ensure the safety and long-term sustainability of operations in outer space.

37. International cooperation was the cornerstone of his country's space programme. The African economy as a whole was increasingly becoming space-oriented, and the continent had one of the highest demands for space products and services in areas such as communications technology, electronic economic and financial transactions, navigation, disaster management, climate change, agriculture, education and health.

38. As Chair of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, South Africa was aware of the numerous challenges in the way of safe access to space and the exploitation of space resources for the benefit of all, particularly with regard to space debris, space traffic management and the application of space science. As a result, South Africa would continue encouraging COPUOS to reform global space governance in order to take into account the increasing number of new space actors, especially from developing nations, and the increasing importance of commercial space actors in the international space environment. South Africa's national development plan recognized the central role of space science and technology in improving quality of life and promoting sustainable economic growth. His Government remained committed to international agreements, treaties and conventions governing outer space and fully endorsed a multilateral approach to issues of such global importance.

39. **Mr. Kim Song** (Democratic People's Republic of Korea) said that all countries should have equal access to outer space, as it was the common heritage of humankind and played a significant role in sustainable economic and social development. A number of countries were actively engaging in space exploration and developing space science and technology as part of their national development strategies, and transnational and interregional cooperation was becoming increasingly dynamic. The development of outer space was no longer dominated by a few developed countries, as cutting-edge space science had become accessible to all Member States.

40. By dint of self-reliance and self-development, his country had become a full-fledged spacefaring nation with solid foundations in space science and technology, which it used for the peaceful purposes of promoting economic development and improving living standards. His Government had hosted a seminar on space science and technology in Pyongyang in 2017, during which a number of presentations had been made on the nation's achievements and experiences in manufacturing and

engineering satellites. As a party to four treaties on outer space, among them 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), the Democratic People's Republic of Korea was fulfilling its obligation to ensure the security and transparency of its peaceful outer space activities.

41. His Government greatly valued cooperation and exchanges with other countries in the field of outer space. Every Member State, particularly a State party to the Outer Space Treaty, had the right to take part in international exchanges and cooperation. However, in flagrant violation of his country's rights and with blatant disregard for international space law and the Charter of the United Nations, the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution [1718 \(2006\)](#) had barred space experts from his country from attending several conferences organized by the Office for Outer Space Affairs in 2018. His delegation protested in the strongest terms the immoral behaviour of that Committee, which stubbornly denounced his country's peaceful satellite launches and had taken extreme measures to block national space experts from engaging in scientific exchanges. It was also regrettable that the Office for Outer Space Affairs, while acknowledging the improper behaviour, had failed to take any appropriate action. The United Nations should encourage international exchanges and cooperation to promote the use of outer space by all Member States in conformity with the purposes and principles of the Charter. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea would continue to exercise its sovereign right to develop its use of outer space for peaceful purposes, which was fully recognized under the Outer Space Treaty and the Charter.

42. **Mr. Liao Gangqiang** (China) said that UNISPACE+50 had been a milestone for international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space. China supported the adoption of the related General Assembly draft resolution ([A/73/L.6](#)), which would strengthen the roles of COPUOS, its Subcommittees and the Office for Outer Space Affairs in improving outer space governance. The "Space 2030" agenda and its implementation plan should reflect the concerns and aspirations of countries with different space capabilities in a comprehensive and balanced manner. It should also fully align with the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development in promoting the application of space technologies, capacity-building, international cooperation and the sustainable development of outer space activities.

43. The Working Group on the Long-term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities, completing its

mandate, had agreed on a preamble and 21 consensus guidelines, which had yet to be tested in practice. However, no consensus had been reached on seven other draft guidelines, and still more issues related to long-term sustainability had not been developed into draft guidelines for discussion. His Government stood ready to continue to consult within COPUOS with all stakeholders so as to arrive at a package arrangement that would design a follow-up mechanism, and determine the form in which the guidelines should be adopted.

44. The existing international rules and regimes should be gradually improved, on the basis of the legal framework of the Outer Space Treaty, to cover new types of space exploration and the development and use of space resources. They should also balance the need to encourage scientific and technological advances while regulating commercial exploitation and sharing the benefits reaped from outer space. COPUOS, particularly the Legal Subcommittee, should be the primary platform for those discussions in order to ensure universality and consistency in the rules, and the establishment of working groups would make the Committee's work more effective.

45. In May 2018, China had successfully launched its Queqiao relay satellite, the first communications satellite to orbit the Lagrange point between the Earth and the Moon. It would provide local relay communications to enable the Chang'e 4 mission to make a soft landing on the Moon and roam and survey its far side. The Beidou Global Navigation and Positioning System had 34 satellites in orbit and would be available across the globe in 2020. In addition, the programme to put a national space station into service in 2022 was in full swing.

46. China had signed over 100 agreements on space cooperation with over 30 countries and international organizations. Chinese spacecraft had carried payloads for a number of countries, and satellites had been launched for Algeria and Venezuela. Remote sensing data had been provided on major natural disasters, including the floods in Bangladesh and Sri Lanka, the earthquake in Mexico and the volcanic eruption in Guatemala. In June 2018, the stationary position of the Fengyun 2H meteorological satellite had been adjusted to provide services for countries along the route of the Belt and Road Initiative, under which his Government was working with participating countries to build also a spatial information corridor to facilitate information exchange and connectivity.

47. In May 2018, China and the United Nations had issued an invitation to countries to take part in

experiments on board China's space station. The Government would co-host forthcoming international conferences and meetings of UN-SPIDER, the International Committee on Global Navigation Satellite Systems and the Asia-Pacific Space Cooperation Organization. The United Nations-affiliated Regional Centre for Space Science and Technology Education for Asia and the Pacific, hosted by Beihang University in Beijing, had run a number of training workshops and had granted scholarships to 50 postgraduate students from 12 countries.

48. Maintaining safety and security was essential to the peaceful use of outer space. His Government opposed an arms race in outer space and the weaponization of outer space and stood ready to work with the international community to develop outer space in a way that better allowed all countries to promote their economic development and social progress.

49. **Mr. Bar-El** (Israel) said that, despite endless conflict, challenges and trying times, his ancient nation had become a world leader in cutting-edge space applications, cybertechnology, space science and medicine. Innovation in space was the new frontier. Israel had launched its first satellite in 1988 and had sent its first astronaut into space aboard the tragic Columbia space shuttle mission 15 years later. Currently, SpaceIL, a non-profit organization, was seeking to make history by landing an Israeli satellite on the Moon. Young people were particularly eager to become involved in space innovation. High school students of all backgrounds from across the country had recently come together to work on an Israeli nanosatellite project, led by two female students.

50. His Government stood ready to make use of the Israel Space Agency and the country's human capital and advanced technologies to contribute to the peaceful use of outer space. Israel supported the Office for Outer Space Affairs as the sole United Nations organ to address the peaceful uses of outer space and the implementation of space-related treaties. Through the Office, Israel sought to enhance its cooperation with other nations in areas such as Earth-orbiting systems and subsystems, ground control segments, space exploration, Earth observation, environmental monitoring and remote navigation. In addition, Israel provided financial support for a platform created under the Office to promote the involvement of women and girls in space issues and encourage them to study science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

51. In 2011, Israel had signed a cooperative agreement with the European Space Agency to increase Israeli involvement in European projects. As a result of a joint

feasibility study conducted in 2012 by the Italian Space Agency and the Israel Space Agency, the Space-borne Hyperspectral Applicative Land and Ocean Mission, or SHALOM, had entered its second phase. In 2017, France and Israel had launched a microsatellite that could make precise observations of land and deep sea, helping to address climate change and food security. The Israel Space Agency had also signed agreements with the United States National Aeronautics and Space Administration concerning the use of an Israeli-designed radiation protection vest and the exploration of nanoscience and nanotechnology, an Israeli expertise. That partnership reflected the ever-strengthening bond between the United States and Israel based on their shared interests and common values. The Israel Space Agency also provided commercial Earth observation images for UN-SPIDER.

52. The critical discoveries awaiting the world in space would only strengthen the sustainability of the planet and improve the collective quality of life on Earth.

53. **Mr. Hoeseb** (Namibia) said that the UNISPACE+50 high-level segment had offered the international community a unique opportunity to reflect on the achievements made in space exploration and global space governance since the first United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE) in 1968. It had also commemorated the launch of the first artificial satellite, Sputnik 1, by the Soviet Union, in 1957. Since that first Conference, the UNISPACE process had helped to increase international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space and capacity-building, particularly to the benefit of developing countries. The role of the Office for Outer Space Affairs and COPUOS in fostering space-related capacity should also be acknowledged. The “Space2030” agenda, which would serve as a driver of sustainable development, outlined a comprehensive and inclusive long-term vision to bridge the gap between countries with developed space-related capabilities and technologies and those with limited capability.

54. His Government had long recognized the importance of research, science and technology as an engine of economic growth and development. Under the national strategic plan to develop local aerospace, geo-information, Earth observation and space science capabilities, the Namibia University of Science and Technology was operating a Virtual Space Data Centre with the assistance of Airbus technology. The Centre, which offered postgraduate courses in aerospace technology, aimed to find wide application of space data in the fields of aviation, maritime and land

transportation, urbanization, mapping and surveying, human health, disaster management, food security, sustainable agriculture, environmental monitoring and natural resource management.

55. Namibia supported the implementation of the African Space Policy and Strategy, adopted in 2016 within the framework of the Agenda 2063 of the African Union. International cooperation was necessary to improve access to space-based data applications, space infrastructure, capacity-building and technology transfer. There must also be balanced participation of women and men in space capability. While space science and technology were fundamental to implementing the 2030 Agenda, the Sendai Framework and the Paris Agreement, the potential development of malicious technology or an arms race in outer space continued to give cause for concern. His delegation therefore urged all Member States to comply with article IV of the Outer Space Treaty.

56. **Mr. Mahfouz** (Egypt) said that collective efforts were required to maintain peace in outer space, which was the shared heritage of humankind. Outer space and other celestial bodies should be used solely for non-military purposes and for the benefit of all peoples, regardless of their level of socioeconomic, scientific or technical development. Given the unceasing rate of technological evolution, existing international agreements on outer space, including the Outer Space Treaty, were no longer sufficient to prevent an arms race in outer space. Egypt therefore supported negotiations to draw up new legally binding instruments to rectify any deficiencies. Every year, in the First Committee, his delegation tabled a draft resolution on the issue, which always received strong international support. Although complementary measures to increase transparency and build confidence were important, priority should be placed on developing a legally binding instrument that increased the effectiveness of the international system governing outer space activities.

57. Egypt had recently established the Egyptian Space Agency, which was tasked with coordinating peaceful space activities, promoting international partnerships and technical cooperation with other States and developing the national space industry with a view to contributing to sustainable development. In addition, the Agency provided expert technical and scientific training, supported innovation, research and development, in collaboration also with academic institutions, and developed peaceful space applications.

58. As all countries had a fundamental right to use outer space, any attempts to regulate outer space should aim to ensure that it was used for the benefit all peoples.

59. **Ms. Mozolina** (Russian Federation) said that outer space was increasingly important to human activities that determined the success of modern societies. Discussions concerning security in outer space should include preventing conflict situations or interference with space activities and preserving their sustainability. As a member of COPUOS, the Russian Federation had suggested a series of substantive, pragmatic proposals to expand upon existing regulations governing outer space activities. However, security had not yet become a priority for many countries, while others did not wish to develop regulations.

60. Despite the constraints in negotiating guidelines, the Working Group on the Long-term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities was to be commended for its successful diplomacy. His delegation's proposal to extend the mandate of the Working Group for an additional year so that it could draft a full compendium of guidelines, as COPUOS had envisioned in 2016, had been rejected. The proposal to create a standing working group had not received support either. Discussions had been highly emotional, and there was a lack of general understanding as to the status of the guidelines, which could not be formally adopted by COPUOS. A solution must be found to address that deadlock and begin the next work cycle.

61. His delegation therefore proposed that the document containing the 21 consensus guidelines and the preamble, which should be adopted by the Fourth Committee and presented to the General Assembly in 2019, should not be considered a full compendium of guidelines. During the forthcoming fifty-sixth session of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, the scope and mandate of a new standing working group should be determined in order to consider the remaining guidelines without imposing a time frame for the completion of work. Furthermore, the agreed guidelines should remain an open document that could be updated occasionally. Negotiations on the long-term sustainability of outer space activities must continue to deal with outstanding issues.

62. With regard to space traffic management, both States and international institutions were increasingly politicizing discussions and falling back on stereotypes. The concept of space traffic management should cover safe operations of large constellations, pre-launch assessments, close proximity operations, active space debris removal and warnings of potentially hazardous events. Space traffic management relied on information-sharing and cooperation to improve the accuracy of data. Rushing decisions for political reasons could prove dangerous, and negotiations that circumvented COPUOS could undermine the existing order in outer

space. Without an international mechanism to model space traffic management, the decision-making process could be monopolized, and it would not be possible to ensure objectivity in determining orbits and launch trajectories.

63. The year 2019 would mark the fortieth anniversary of the adoption of the Agreement Governing the Activities of States on the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies (the Moon Agreement), yet a number of States had not yet signed or implemented it. Some States believed that unilateral actions would lead to real prospects for developing outer space resources and were conducting negotiations on platforms outside of COPUOS. It was regrettable that serious discussions on the status of resources had not yet taken place within the Legal Subcommittee. Nevertheless, the Moon Agreement should be taken into consideration in any discussion involving space resources, out of respect for its States parties, particularly developing countries.

64. The Russian Federation would be holding a conference on the twentieth anniversary of the International Space Station, and he invited all Member States and relevant stakeholders to attend.

65. **Mr. Paudel** (Nepal) said that outer space was the common heritage of humankind and its exploration and use should be carried out for the wider benefit of humanity. All countries, irrespective of their size or level of economic or scientific development, should have equal access to space technology. Access should be particularly encouraged for least developed and landlocked developing countries, since they had not yet benefited proportionately from space activities. Furthermore, outer space should be kept free of weapons. Nepal had participated in the UNISPACE+50 high-level segment and was working to increase its engagement with the international community in the peaceful uses of outer space.

66. Space-science applications for satellite communications, remote sensing, land use and mapping and disaster information management could improve people's lives, conserve natural resources, enhance disaster preparedness and mitigation and promote sustainable development. United Nations programmes such as UN-SPIDER had served as gateways to space information to support disaster management. Improved access to space data and infrastructure could support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, the Sendai Framework and the Paris Agreement.

67. As COPUOS developed a "Space2030" agenda and implementation plan based on the significant results of the UNISPACE+50 process, the international community should work closely with all stakeholders to

promote the peaceful use of outer space for the benefit of all humanity, in conformity with international law. There must also be greater technical and financial cooperation with least developed countries in the field of space technology to help those who were left furthest behind. Lastly, coordination between the Office for Outer Space Affairs and the Technology Bank for the Least Developed Countries would advance the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals.

The meeting rose at 5 p.m.