Delegation from Represented by

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Position Paper for United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs (UNOOSA) and International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) Aerospace Symposium Joint Session Committee

Topic I: The Environment and Space Activity

Like many nations represented at this committee session, Venezuela continues to commit to the protection of the environment. We believe it is the global communities duty to devise a solution so that space activity continues to practice in a safe and environmentally friendly way. For this to happen, we must agree to invest in sanctions that keep the planet and its surrounding space as clean as possible and work diligently to reverse the most prominent effects of pollution, if not for us, then for future generations. During President Chavez’s term, the government rewrote the Constitution in 1999, and for the first time, developing an environmental policy (Venezuela Information Office, 2008). The country of Venezuela has amended to promote sustainable development and to give all citizens the right to a clean environment. Other steps taken include protecting our diverse ecosystems by allotting 55% of our land as protected space and producing “green” gasoline, formulated without the use of lead (CIA World Factbook: Venezeula, 2016). As a part of the United Nations, we have pledged to follow their initiatives when it comes to our planet, especially those put forward by the United Nations Environment Programme. Two years before the first man would ever step foot on the moon, the United Nations Outer Space Treaty passed in 1967. In almost 50 years the nature of space exploration has changed dramatically. On the topic of the environment, there is one section of the charter that needs updating where it says, “States shall avoid harmful contamination of space and celestial bodies” (United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs, 1967). Originally, global warming was not an imminent threat, but today the world is on the cusp of damaging our environment beyond repair. We need to reconsider our approach as a community to addressing the problems of climate change, particularly our approach towards the 2 degrees of warming mark. We should be focusing on how to maintain life on our planet before we look to another for a quick fix. Additionally, on the pollution of space, the more junk we add to our orbit, the more dangerous it will become for us to travel beyond our atmosphere safely and to maintain equipment already installed in orbit. It is the duty of this committee to work collectively to pass a resolution that addresses the issues concerning the environment of space and Earth.

Topic II: The Militarization of Space and International Law

The country of Venezuela cannot support the militarization of space. As a nation, we understand that satellites are an integral part of any country and support the use of such technology for daily necessities such as research, internet, and communication. However, it is in a time of conflict or uncertainty that the militarization of space could prove dangerous and potentially fatal to humanity. It is highly encouraged that this committee expands on existing International Humanitarian laws as well as the Outer Space Treaty to ensure the continuation of the human race. There are no beneficial outcomes to using space as an advantage, especially in the case of an arms race. There are too few countries that would have the majority of power. Those of us with few satellites and an even smaller space budget would be at the mercy of power giants should things escalate. If nothing becomes of the race, then it is a waste of resources and has contributed to the pollution of Earth and Space, another thing no one can afford. Already the United Nations Outer Space Treaty addresses the possibility of launching weapons into orbit and includes the mandate that, “States shall not place nuclear weapons or other weapons of mass destruction in orbit or on celestial bodies or station them in outer space in any other manner,” (United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs, 1967). In addition to weapons that are a threat to life forms, Venezuela strongly encourages the committee to create a resolution that would deter countries from employing Anti-Satellite Technology (ASAT). Satellites perform vital tasks and if destroyed in space and not removed, will contribute to the already increasing entities of space debris in orbit. These will pose further threats to envoys of humankind such as astronauts and projects such as the International Space Station. The Venezuelan government asks the committee to please this carefully about how decisions we make today will affect our future generations.

Topic III: Space Commercialization

Venezuela believes in the equal right to utilize space and supports all peaceful endeavors of Member States and supports achieving the commercialization of space in a sustainable manner. In 2014 at the General Assembly Fourth Committee’s 69th session Henry Moreno of Venezuela commented on Venezuela’s view on space commercialization saying, “His country had promoted technology independence to achieve the well-being of its people” (2014) Venezuela is the 5th largest producer of oil in the world and our “green” gasoline, produced without lead, would be an asset to space commercialization because of the reduced environmental impact. Space commercialization offers many potential benefits for humanity and countries involved. It would facilitate the education of larger populations of people and boost economies by creating new jobs in many sectors of the workforce. It would also promote cooperation and communication between the private industry and the government as well as between governments. Another added benefit could potentially be the increase in opportunities for countries that wish to invest in the development of their space programs. For the country of Venezuela, we hope to benefit from space commercialization by exporting oil and gasoline needed for the increased number of launches, as well as use the money earned to invest in building more satellites to contribute to our citizen's well-being. Moreno (2014) also outlined that while Venezuela as a nation is a far cry from a booming space industry, we hope to work with our allies Argentina, France and China to fulfill agreements to develop space technology. This committee’s goal should be to establish a set of guidelines as this industry begins to develop and Venezuela plans to be a part of any resolutions that benefit humanity.

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