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Summary record of the 16th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Thursday, 26 October 2023, at 10 a.m.

Chair: Mr. Woszczek (Vice-Chair) . . . . . (Poland)

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The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.

Agenda item 48: International cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space (*continued*) (A/78/20)

1. **Ms. Pacey-Parker** (Canada), speaking also on behalf of Australia and New Zealand, said that the constructive engagement of all Member States was necessary given the unique role of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, which depended on consensus, respect for procedure and the Vienna spirit, a cooperative and balanced approach to deliberation and decision-making.

2. The adoption in 2019 of the 21 Guidelines for the Long-term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities had had consensus at its heart, as was the case of every successful endeavour of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. The three delegations were concerned about the departure from a consensus-based approach in the introduction of the draft resolution entitled "Space technology for promoting peace" (A/C.4/78/L.5) and suggested that the sponsors bring the matter before the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, following past practice. To do otherwise would cause irreparable harm.

3. It was common and beneficial for space systems to have multiple uses. The clearest example was position, navigation and timing capabilities, such as the Global Positioning System and the European Satellite Navigation System, Galileo, initially devised for government use but subsequently widely applied in the commercial, civil and scientific sectors. Limiting the peaceful uses of space objects would diminish their benefits for all States. There was an important distinction between discussions on space security in disarmament forums and those on the peaceful uses of outer space, held in Vienna; the three delegations believed that applying the existing legal framework and enacting norms and principles of responsible behaviour would preserve the peaceful uses of outer space for future generations. The First and Fourth Committees would hold a joint meeting on space security and civil space issues during the seventy-ninth session of the General Assembly; any concerns held by the authors of the draft resolution on space science and technology for promoting peace should be raised in the relevant forum.

4. **Mr. Mungandi** (Zambia) said that Member States should study existing and potential threats and security risks to space systems, whether from outer space or on Earth, to ensure the long-term sustainability of space as a shared resource. That resource must be protected for the benefit of future generations and not used for space wars or other harmful activities.

5. Closer international cooperation should be encouraged not only to share knowledge and best practices but also to contribute to capacity-building in the area of access to beneficial space technologies and systems, especially for the least developed countries. In that regard and in collaboration with the private sector, his Government had commenced provision of a low-Earth orbit Internet service that would serve millions of people, particularly in rural areas, and enable progress in communications and connectivity, education, agricultural development and early warning systems. The digitalization of government services had improved delivery and boosted the country's digital economy.

6. Outer space should be free for exploration and use by all States, without discrimination and in accordance with international law. He reiterated the call made by the Secretary-General to reduce space threats through norms, rules and principles of responsible behaviour.

7. **Mr. Birdi** (India) said that, as a major spacefaring nation, India had a vital development interest in space, which must be preserved as a common heritage of humankind. Through its space programme, for more than 50 years the country had focused on integrating advances in space technology and applications with national development goals for the benefit of all. In 2023, it had achieved a soft landing in its third lunar mission, Chandrayan-3, and would enhance understanding of the Moon through the related experiments. It had also launched a solar observatory that would enhance understanding of the Sun's effect on space weather. The country was also making progress in its human space flight programme.

8. India had signed more than 260 space cooperation documents with 61 countries and 5 multinational bodies. Together with its partners, it continued space cooperation activities in Earth observation, climate action, space exploration and space situation awareness, and had established portals that offered satellite data and products of interest to Pacific island countries and to Oman.

9. His country, knowing the importance of space situational awareness to safe and sustainable space operations, had established a system in that field, in addition to observation facilities to track and monitor space objects. A control centre had been established to process observational data from multiple sources, and to identify and catalogue objects.

10. The Indian Space Research Organization shared its facilities and expertise through courses conducted by the Indian Institute of Remote Sensing and the Centre for Space Science and Technology Education in Asia and the Pacific, benefiting more than 4,500 people from over

110 countries. His country also provided training in nanosatellite technology.

11. India chaired the new Working Group on the Long-term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, which would identify challenges to sustainability and facilitate the implementation of the related Guidelines, and was preparing a capacity-building workshop to be held during the Subcommittee's upcoming session.

12. Because of developments in space activities, space law must adapt to take into account greater participation by the private sector and other new actors to ensure that the space environment was conducive to peaceful uses and to enhance the safety and security of space assets. International consultations and consensus in that regard were essential.

13. **Ms. Archinard** (Switzerland) said that the development of new technologies, business models and types of activities in the space sector, with a growing number of public and private players that relied on new financing and partnership models, created opportunities and challenges that required stronger global governance and international legislation. Switzerland had updated its space policy in recognition of that fact and had reaffirmed its commitment to the international governance of space activities, with a focus on security and stability in outer space and the long-term sustainability and safety of outer space activities. In that regard, Switzerland was grateful to the Secretary-General for "Our Common Agenda policy brief 7: for all humanity – the future of outer space governance" (A/77/CRP.1/Add.6) and believed that the States members of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space should consider its contents. Her Government welcomed the preparatory events organized by Portugal and the Office for Outer Space Affairs on the theme of management and sustainability of space activities with a view to a possible input to the Summit of the Future in 2024.

14. Her Government also welcomed progress made by the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and its Subcommittees on the sustainability of space activities and legal aspects of activities related to space resources, in addition to the adoption of a new work plan on nuclear power sources in outer space, enabling the sharing of experiences with regard to the existing principles and safety framework. It supported initiatives to study the preservation of dark and quiet skies in response to the rapid development of the low Earth orbit.

15. Firmly believing that international and interdisciplinary collaboration were essential and that science and technology provided the basis for solutions to sustainable development challenges, Switzerland had actively promoted the use of space technologies in global health and supported the International Conference on Space and Global Health, organized by the Office for Outer Space Affairs and the World Health Organization.

16. With regard to the draft resolution entitled "Space technology for promoting peace" (A/C.4/78/L.5), her delegation regretted that the usual process, requiring consensus at every stage, had not been followed. The initiative should be reconsidered.

17. Switzerland had adopted an Act on the authorization and oversight of space activities, the registration of space objects and the management of liability questions, in order to honour its international commitments in the area.

18. **Ms. Al Rashdi** (Oman) said that the growing exploration of outer space improved living standards and could accelerate the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. It also played roles in communication, navigation, broadcasting, climate change and monitoring, efforts to combat desertification, and disaster and natural resource management, and must therefore be allocated the necessary resources. The Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space should strengthen international cooperation so that all Member States could harness the benefits of space technologies and innovations, in particular through capacity-building for developing countries.

19. Her country attached particular importance to the peaceful uses of outer space, and had consequently established an astronaut training centre and signed international and regional treaties related to the field, such as the 1967 Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies. In conjunction with the United States National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), Oman had convened a hackathon, attended by 185 States, in October 2023 to foster regional and international cooperation between universities, build alliances, develop innovative solutions to global challenges and strengthen capacities in the field of space. In January 2024, Oman would hold the Middle East Space Conference to raise awareness of regional activities in the field and to attract investment. Apart from strengthening regional space strategies, the topics to be discussed included satellite communications and Earth observation.

20. The exploration of outer space opened horizons for coming generations and offered a unique opportunity to transfer technology and knowledge, thereby

strengthening national and international scientific and technical capacity. Space projects contributed to national economies through enhanced cooperation between businesses. Her country was ready to invest in space and in effective partnerships with the private and public sectors.

21. **Ms. Baños Müller** (El Salvador) acknowledged the significant contribution that advances in space science and technology for peaceful purposes had made to humankind and the major role played by the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space as a platform for dialogue and international collaboration and in the governance of outer space activities. To ensure that the benefits of space were within reach of all and were applied to the achievement of sustainable development, collaboration was needed among Governments, the United Nations system, international organizations, academia and the commercial space sector.

22. All countries, without discrimination and independently of their level of scientific, technical and economic development, must have equal access to outer space, to the benefit of all humankind. Space activities and technologies must not become another area of inequality in and among countries; rather, they were essential to addressing challenges and meeting the commitments made by Member States with regard to sustainable development, because of their potential in terms of combating climate change, adapting to natural disasters and ensuring food security.

23. In view of the positive contribution of the Office for Outer Space Affairs to the long-term sustainability of space activities, it should be provided with sufficient resources and funds to support countries in their efforts to harness the benefits of space science and technology and their applications. In particular, El Salvador supported the United Nations Platform for Space-based Information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response (UN-SPIDER) because of its contribution to capacity-building in the application of space data to disaster management. Her Government supported the Office's promotion of gender equality in space activities, including through the enhancement of women's role in the teaching of science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

24. **Ms. Lim** (Singapore) said that the space ecosystem had become a vital part of daily life. Space-based infrastructure and technology could address climate change and support important economic sectors such as aviation and shipping, in addition to playing a critical role in the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

25. States must collaborate to preserve outer space as a peaceful global commons, accessible and beneficial to all. In that regard, Singapore had contributed at the international level to disaster relief; the remote sensing facilities of two of its universities were members of Sentinel Asia, an initiative through which real-time disaster information was shared in the Asia-Pacific region. The country's Earth Observatory had provided damage proxy maps, in partnership with the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency, NASA and the European Space Agency, to support disaster relief efforts after the 2023 earthquakes in Türkiye and the Syrian Arab Republic.

26. Singapore strongly supported the establishment of guidelines to ensure safety and responsible behaviour in outer space, and had participated in the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and the first session of the open-ended working group on reducing space threats through norms, rules and principles of responsible behaviours, in addition to other international and regional space-related forums. Recognizing the importance of exchanges among actors in the global space community, her country hosted the annual Global Space and Technology Convention, a platform for space agencies, industry professionals and other interested space players to discuss technology, industry and policy developments and opportunities to engage in collaboration and accelerate technological innovations.

27. Her Government continued to support the local space ecosystem and advance its capabilities in different areas. The Office for Space Technology and Industry had launched a programme to develop space support for aviation, shipping and sustainability and to explore emerging domains, such as quantum technology, and their applications on Earth. The Office supported the SpeQtral startup, which would launch a satellite to demonstrate quantum safe encryption solutions.

28. **Mr. Al Kahtani** (Saudi Arabia) said that international efforts must be pooled to ensure that robust foundations underpinned the peaceful use of outer space with a view to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals in the social and economic spheres, including telecommunications, satellite navigation, Earth observation and disaster management. Saudi Arabia had ratified space treaties and conventions, and welcomed the efforts of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and its subsidiary bodies to ensure that space was used to the benefit of all States. It had established a space agency to coordinate satellite systems and communications services, develop spacecraft launch technologies, strengthen space infrastructure, ground stations, space transportation vehicles and suborbital flights, and train national staff,

while cooperating with competent authorities in the field of space. During its presidency of the Group of 20, it had convened the first high-level regional meeting to strengthen cooperation and develop a common vision for the space economy.

29. The country's astronaut programme, part of its 2030 Vision, had already resulted in participation by the first Saudi male and female astronauts in an International Space Station mission. A national space strategy would be launched in the near future to strengthen Saudi initiatives and projects to benefit humankind in sustainable development and health care.

30. Outer space must be used for peaceful purposes only, in line with international treaties and agreements, in the interests of all humankind. An arms race in outer space could erode international peace and security. Efforts to regulate outer space activities must not hinder the exercise of States' right to use outer space for peaceful purposes.

31. **Ms. Poling** (United States of America) said that the implementation of the Guidelines for the Long-term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities and the establishment of the Working Group on Legal Aspects of Space Resource Activities were evidence of the importance of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and its subcommittees. The initiative of that Committee's Chair to make the body's work more efficient and effective was welcomed by the United States. With regard to a new challenge that had to be addressed, Member States should consider the establishment of an expert group on dark and quiet skies.

32. To protect the effectiveness of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, members must continue to operate under processes, precedents and procedures that had furthered their collective efforts to explore and utilize outer space responsibly, safely and sustainably. Issues that would be more appropriately addressed by other elements of the United Nations system must not be discussed by a body that had achieved so much through consensus rather than brinksmanship or voting. The spirit of Vienna was foundational to those efforts; to keep that spirit alive the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space must remain the forum for substantive discussions.

33. **Mr. Kusano** (Japan) said that Japan welcomed the achievements of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space to ensure the safety, security, sustainability and stability of outer space, and recognized the Office of Outer Space Affairs for enhancing international cooperation and capacity-building. Given the growing number of space actors, countries must conduct their space activities responsibly, in accordance with the normative framework developed within the United Nations system, which had played an important role in complementing existing treaties. In addition, the expanding scope of space activities needed the development of a set of principles and best practices to enhance governance and the rule of law in the field. Japan would support that work and had developed its own programmes covering new activities together with international partners, noting the importance of promoting international cooperation in the establishment of norms and rules for the sustainable use of space.

34. As a leading spacefaring nation, Japan continued to promote cooperation for the benefit of all. It saw international collaboration as a key component of its exploration and science missions. Japan had participated in the International Space Station mission since it began and would play a part in the extension of the Station's operation. The Japanese Kibō module of the Station was a remarkable example of international cooperation that provided emerging space actors with opportunities for small-scale deployments. Leveraging the technological knowledge it had obtained, Japan had played an active role in international space exploration missions and had signed the Artemis Accords on the Principles for Cooperation in the Civil Exploration and Use of the Moon, Mars, Comets, and Asteroids for Peaceful Purposes, making a political commitment to the governance of civil space exploration and the peaceful uses of outer space. It was participating in the civil lunar gateway under the Artemis programme.

35. In the field of space science, Japan had launched the X-ray Imaging and Spectroscopy mission in collaboration with NASA and the European Space Agency. The mission's launch vehicle carried a smart lunar lander to demonstrate pinpoint landing technology. The mission aimed to study the composition and evolution of celestial objects through high-resolution observations of hot gas plasma. In 2024, in collaboration with United States and European agencies, Japan would launch the Martian Moons Exploration mission, with the goal of returning samples from the Martian moon Phobos. There was also cooperation with India, the United States and Europe on the lunar polar exploration mission, scheduled for launch in 2025.

36. His country played an active part in regional cooperation and capacity-building to enhance the rule of law in outer space, in which there was a growing interest in the Asia-Pacific region owing to the diversification of space activities. The efforts of Japan in the field of space policy and space law innovation had led to a joint report on the status of national space legislation, developed within the framework of the Asia-Pacific Regional Space Agency Forum, which had been submitted to the

Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. Japan also cooperated with the Office for Outer Space Affairs to strengthen the capacity of countries in the Asia-Pacific region in the field of space law for new space actors.

37. His delegation shared the serious concerns expressed by other delegations about the draft resolution entitled "Space technology for promoting peace" (A/C.4/78/L.5), because Japan attached great importance to the long-standing practice of discussing substantial matters within the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space before bringing a draft text before the Fourth Committee for its consideration. That traditional consensual approach was needed now more than ever. Japan could not support the draft resolution, which had not been introduced in accordance with established working methods and on which consensus had not been reached.

38. **Mr. Kedar** (Israel) said that Israel remained committed to cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space and recognized the significance of space-related technologies in addressing the impact of wars and in contributing to peacebuilding and prosperity. The use of space and satellite data for communication, situation awareness and humanitarian assistance was all the more essential in times of conflict and recovery.

39. Israel had successfully participated in the Artemis 1 mission, contributing an anti-radiation suit that it would develop further for future Artemis missions, in addition to promoting cutting-edge technologies to meet other potential needs. His country was willing to engage in international collaboration in that regard.

40. Recent regional developments, including the Abraham Accords Peace Agreement, had paved the way for partnerships to address such challenges as climate change, food security and disaster management. Existing collaborative efforts included the Vegetation and Environment Monitoring on a New Microsatellite project, with the United Arab Emirates, the research results of which would be published shortly; work on cooperation in the space sector with Azerbaijan; and a joint venture with India, the United Arab Emirates and the United States on the use of space-based observation data to establish a tool for policymakers, institutions and entrepreneurs.

41. Israel would host the Space for Women Conference in 2024, reaffirming its commitment to advancing gender equality and diversity in space-related fields. Also committed to ensuring the responsible and sustained use of outer space for the benefit of all nations, it acknowledged the significance of the implementation of the Guidelines for the Long-term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities.

42. **Mr. Al Qasim** (United Arab Emirates), congratulating India on its successful mission to the Moon, said that the significance of international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space must be underscored at what was a moment of unprecedented technological advancement. The potential of outer space could be harnessed for all humankind, contributing to peace, development and the well-being of all nations.

43. Scientific experiments in the field of outer space, such as the experiments conducted by an Emirati astronaut on board the International Space Station, had had real and positive impacts in multiple areas. His country had also engaged in exploration programmes to the Moon, Mars and the asteroid belt, while diligently collaborating with its international partners.

44. The United Arab Emirates had established a programme to use satellite data to map the destruction caused by extreme weather events and develop early warning systems to limit the impact of climate change. With international partners, it would compile a loss and damage atlas to highlight the consequences of climate change and widen the availability of warning systems to support mitigation efforts for vulnerable nations. The Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, to be held in his country in November 2023, would promote space capabilities and provide opportunities for the space sector to raise awareness of space applications in the field of mitigating climate and environmental challenges.

45. Outer space, as the legacy of all humankind, must be used in a spirit of responsibility and transparency. There must be no arms race in outer space. Space programmes would foster international cooperation through collaborative initiatives and joint development. Having contributed to the advancement of scientific research, technology and the sharing of knowledge, the United Arab Emirates would continue to strengthen global efforts to ensure the long-term sustainability of the space sector. The goal, beyond the exploration of science, was to develop advanced technologies of importance to the progress and welfare of humankind.

46. **Mr. Mabeba** (South Africa) said that, in view of the rapid increase in the number of public and private actors in outer space activities, his country supported efforts to ensure that those activities benefited everyone and contributed to the prosperity and sustainable development of all nations.

47. His Government's space policy focused on applying advancements to further the development of

science and technology to ensure sustainable development and contribute to economic growth and social development. The policy was based on the principles of peaceful and responsible use, in accordance with national legislation and international treaties and best practices; the promotion of research and development and space science and technology; and international cooperation with African States to extend the benefits of space technology to the African continent.

48. Space was key to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals in Africa and to the implementation of Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want in such fields as water, climate change, Earth observation, satellite identification and disaster risk management. Countries without advanced space programmes must receive the benefits of the peaceful uses of outer space.

49. Any attempts to develop space for reasons inconsistent with international peace and security and the Sustainable Development Goals were unacceptable. Conflict should be prevented through a multilateral treaty against an arms race in outer space, prohibiting the placement of weapons in space and the threat or use of force against space objects, negotiated through transparency and confidence-building, in order to ensure that outer space was used for scientific research and development and to protect the integrity of the space system.

50. **Mr. Ahidjo** (Cameroon) said that humankind's activities in the exploration and use of space had resulted in considerable quantitative and qualitative scientific and technological progress that had helped to build a better and safer world through the peaceful use of such advances to the benefit of the economic, social and cultural development of nations. Space sciences and technologies played a key role in telemedicine; satellite navigation; remote sensing; disaster prevention, monitoring and management; environmental monitoring; weather forecasting; and the Internet. They also contributed to sustainable and socioeconomic development.

51. His delegation welcomed the implementation of the African Outer Space Programme, a flagship project of Agenda 2063, and the agreement on the African Space Agency, hosted by Egypt. Those developments were evidence of the many social and commercial opportunities that space offered the African continent. Cooperation under the African Space Strategy would enable the use and sharing of infrastructure and data to manage epidemics, natural resources and the environment, thereby contributing to natural disaster management, weather forecasting, climate change mitigation and adaptation, agriculture and food security, peacekeeping missions, and conflict resolution. However, that promising scenario and the very survival of humankind were threatened by the growing trend towards the militarization of space by Powers that were engaging in an arms race in space and by the proliferation of space debris.

52. The international community should not only protect the principles underlying the peaceful uses of outer space but also consider the current challenges arising therefrom through international, regional and interregional cooperation to uphold the rule of law by ensuring the development of norms of space law and the widest possible adherence to international space treaties. The benefits of space must be safeguarded for all countries, regardless of their level of scientific, technical or economic development. Lasting solutions to current problems could be found through the forums of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and its subsidiary bodies, and his delegation commended the United Nations on efforts that included the five multilateral space treaties that had grown from the Declaration of Legal Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space. Those forums should continue to promote the peaceful uses of outer space and to consolidate and strengthen moral principles and legal instruments to guarantee a peaceful, fair and non-discriminatory use of outer space and all space applications. International cooperation must be reinforced in the areas referred to in the Declaration on International Cooperation in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space for the Benefit and in the Interest of All States, Taking into Particular Account the Needs of Developing Countries.

53. **Ms. Ma** Yuanchun (China) said that new types of space activities such as resource development and low-Earth orbit mega-constellations required a more refined and improved governance framework. More attention should be paid to the regulation of commercial space flights owing to the increase in non-governmental activities. Greater international cooperation was needed to bridge the space divide and meet the needs of developing countries for technical exchange and capacity-building. To address those challenges, China proposed improvements to existing rules governing the use of space based on the principles of universally applicable space law, with the Outer Space Treaty as its cornerstone. Those principles included working for the benefits and interests of all countries, non-appropriation, State responsibility for space activities conducted by governmental and non-governmental entities, due consideration for other countries' activities, and international cooperation. The role of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space should be

complemented, but not disrupted or replaced, by non-governmental processes. There should be no duplication of its role as an outer space arms control platform. International cooperation should be more inclusive to better serve common interests, considering the needs of emerging spacefaring nations and developing countries, with the assumption by the private sector of greater responsibilities.

54. China had continued to share the dividends of its space development. Its space station was in a phase of application development, and work was underway with the Office for Outer Space Affairs and relevant countries on space science experiments. International cooperation opportunities in astronaut selection and training would be explored in the future.

55. Her country had hosted the Global Navigation Satellite Systems Global Partners Forum and was an active participant in the International Committee on Global Navigation Satellite Systems, supporting the participation of eligible countries. It promoted joint efforts on the International Lunar Research Station and welcomed international cooperation with the Chang'e-8 mission. In the field of remote sensing, China had been working for years with France and Brazil to monitor marine environments and deforestation, respectively. Successful work to assist developing countries to build capacities had been conducted with Egypt and the Asia-Pacific region.

56. **Ms. Campos** (Brazil) said that international cooperation, a central element of the implementation of the Outer Space Treaty, was key to her country's space policy, based on the belief that the benefits of space technologies should be made widely available and that developing countries should receive support, including training, to make full use of them. The Brazilian Institute of Space Research had developed open-source applications in deforestation monitoring, space weather, climate, oceans, Earth observation, geographic information, and disaster monitoring and warning systems.

57. The safety and security of outer space was of great importance and the domain must remain free of threats and violence. The discussions in working groups related to outer space, and in the Conference on Disarmament, on the prevention of an arms race in outer space should be continued, hopefully in a more constructive fashion where the Conference was concerned. Existing confidence-building and transparency measures, including those set out in the report of the Group of Governmental Experts on Transparency and Confidence-Building Measures in Outer Space Activities (A/68/189), comprised a positive agenda in the field of space.

58. Just as the Declaration of Legal Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space had served as the basis for the Outer Space Treaty, the Guidelines for the Long-term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities could be used to develop a new space treaty that would enable innovative solutions to new challenges that could pose a risk to living standards and welfare, and to the exercise of social and economic rights, which increasingly relied on the peaceful uses of space.

59. A regional pioneer in monitoring changes in land use, Brazil had established three projects based on remote sensing in the Amazon to monitor the rainforest, detect deforestation, map land use and land cover, and provide data and alerts for deforestation and degradation mitigation. In conjunction with Argentina, her country was developing two satellites to monitor ocean surfaces to enable studies of ecosystems, the carbon cycle and habitats, and to provide ocean mapping.

60. **Ms. Chan Valverde** (Costa Rica) said that space technologies played a vital role in addressing the many challenges facing humankind through Earth observation, climate change monitoring, global communications, satellite navigation and scientific research. Almost 40 per cent of the Sustainable Development Goals benefited directly from space and Earth observation data, which is why the "Space2030" Agenda contained a commitment to the peaceful and sustainable use of space.

61. The initiatives of the Office for Outer Space Affairs to support developing countries' space capacities were appreciated. As a participant in the Space Law for New Space Actors project, Costa Rica would host an advisory technical mission on space law that would assess its needs with regard to its regulatory framework and in order to meet its existing commitments. The mission would bring together representatives of the Government, academia and the private sector and help to harness the benefits that space offered.

62. Internationally, the pace of development and diversification in space activities posed challenges in the governance of outer space. "Our Common Agenda policy brief 7: for all humanity – the future of outer space governance" (A/77/CRP.1/Add.6) contained important proposals on space traffic management, debris removal and space resource exploitation, which Costa Rica would use as the bases for the upcoming negotiations on the Pact for the Future.

63. Her Government firmly believed that the active, significant and equitable participation of women in decision-making and action was a powerful tool in the development of space activities to the benefit of humankind. In accordance with the principle of non-discrimination, which was enshrined in the Outer Space Treaty, genders and nations must be equitably represented. However, the proportion of women in the high-level activities of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and the Office for Outer Space Affairs revealed that much remained to be achieved in the field of gender, and Costa Rica called on all States to address the parity issue.

64. **Mr. Temesgen** (Ethiopia) said that Ethiopia was firmly committed to the principles underlying the Space treaties. Space activities could only be sustainable when space technology and applications brought fair and mutual benefits and fully respected territorial integrity and sovereignty. However, developing countries continued to face technical and financial problems in obtaining the benefits of space technologies. International cooperation in capacity-building, technical assistance and technology transfer was therefore vital if such States were to enjoy their rights to explore and use outer space for sustainable development. The Office for Outer Space Affairs should strengthen its capacity-building support programmes to contribute to the long-term sustainability of outer space activities.

65. International collaboration was also important for the implementation of the "Space2030" Agenda, especially to address gaps in capacities and to enhance the contributions of space activities to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. Ethiopia welcomed the policy brief on the future of outer space governance (A/77/CRP.1/Add.6), which would serve as a basis for Member States' inputs in preparation for the Summit of the Future. The African Union's space activities flagship project under its Agenda 2063 was also welcome and would give African countries an opportunity to benefit from space and achieve their development goals. He called on all Member States, especially major space actors, to prevent an arms race in, and the militarization and weaponization of, outer space.

66. His country had made strides in the development of the space sector. The Space Science and Geospatial Institute had launched a graduate aerospace engineering programme and a summer capacity-building training centre for children. Infrastructure in the country included a museum, a planetarium, and an aerospace engineering and innovation centre. Support for start-ups and the private sector was provided and the satellite control centre was being modernized. Large satellite ground stations were being built with the support of development partners. Local universities received support from the national space institute to use satellite imaging in agriculture, irrigation, energy, forestry and tourism.

67. **Mr. Belousko** (Russian Federation), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that he understood that the draft resolution entitled "Space technology for promoting peace" (A/C.4/78/L.5) would be discussed during the meeting of the Working Group of the Whole, to be held later that day. However, he wished to respond to the comments made by the representative of Switzerland regarding the creation of an undesirable precedent by the Russian Federation, in violation of the long-standing practice of seeking consensus on space-related draft resolutions in the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space before introducing them in the Fourth Committee. When, in 2022, Switzerland had introduced a draft resolution on space and global health in the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, his country had made constructive proposals to refine the document, particularly regarding the need to grant non-discriminatory access to the benefits of global health for all and to incorporate into the global health system the medical developments used by leading spacefaring nations to prepare cosmonauts. For politicized reasons, however, a group of Western countries had flatly refused even to discuss those proposals. The Russian Federation would have had every right to invoke the principle of consensus and block the Swiss proposal, but had instead shown goodwill and allowed that proposal to be agreed upon by the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and the Fourth Committee, in accordance with the spirit of Vienna, which had been mentioned at the current meeting by the representative of the United States. It was surprising to hear reproaches from Switzerland regarding the preservation of the tradition of consensus in the adoption of space resolutions; the Russian Federation considered such reproaches to be a regrettable example of the application of a double standard.

68. The representative of Canada, speaking also on behalf of Australia and New Zealand, had said that civil systems, such as the Global Positioning System and Galileo, were essential to socioeconomic processes on Earth and must function in a stable manner. The delegation of the Russian Federation agreed and had in fact called, in draft resolution A/C.4/78/L.5, for the General Assembly to reaffirm the common understanding that peaceful civil space technologies should be used to promote peace. If the representative of Canada said as much in her national statements, why

could that understanding not be reaffirmed through the adoption of a draft resolution introduced by the Russian Federation and a group of co-sponsors? The reason was that the United States and a number of its allies, including in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, had taken a collective political decision that it was permissible and expedient to use civil space systems, including commercial systems, not merely for military purposes but to participate directly in armed conflict, provide stable communications with troops, control drones and target precision weapons. Unfortunately, the practice had proved to be effective; those countries had no interest in abandoning it or in making any commitments in that regard, including in the General Assembly, where they hid behind the need to draw up so-called consensus resolutions in the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. What consensus resolutions could be hammered out with countries that could not affirm the political importance of using civil systems to promote peace?

The meeting rose at noon.