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### **Special Political and Decolonization Committee** (Fourth Committee)

Summary record of the 13th meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Tuesday, 17 October 2017, at 3.30 p.m.

Chair: Mr. Ramírez Carreño ...... (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela)

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Agenda item 52: International cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space (*continued*)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.30 p.m.

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

1. Mr. Sukhee (Mongolia) said that having established its first space communication station in 1971 and seen its first astronaut accomplish a space mission in 1981, Mongolia had long been committed to promoting the development and peaceful uses of space science and technology. Mazaalai, the first Mongolian space satellite, had been launched from the International Space Station in July 2017. In addition to broadcasting the Mongolian national anthem into space, the satellite was measuring air density and investigating cosmic radiation, and would enable Mongolia to conduct independent space studies, capture geographic images, improve mapping and better prevent natural disasters. His Government expected the national satellite programme to contribute to the implementation of the "Mongolia Sustainable Development Vision 2030" and other national development projects. Mongolia was actively cooperating with space-related organizations in the Asia-Pacific region and stood ready to work with COPUOS in preserving outer space for peaceful purposes only.

2. Ms. Koliam (Cameroon) said that States should take advantage of the benefits of space technology, including applications that could assist them in promoting sustainable development and overcoming challenges relating to climate change. However, with the militarization of space and the proliferation of space that promising outlook was becoming debris, increasingly bleak. The international community should seriously consider ways to ensure the safe and sustainable use of space, and how best to exploit it peacefully for the benefit of humanity. Strengthening international, regional and interregional cooperation; ensuring the rule of law, including the development of relevant regulations on space; and safeguarding peace in outer space were crucial to ensuring that space activities would continue to benefit all peoples regardless of their level of economic or scientific development. In that regard, Cameroon welcomed United Nations efforts to establish an international legal regime incorporating and developing the concepts contained in the Declaration of Legal Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space.

3. COPUOS should continue working to consolidate and strengthen that international legal regime in order to ensure the peaceful, just and equitable use of space technology. All countries had the right to reap the benefits of outer space activities, and developing countries should receive assistance from the international community to develop their capacities in that area, thus enabling them to tackle their pressing economic and social challenges.

4. Mr. Zaayman (South Africa) said that the benefits of outer space must be accessible to all countries, not just those with a space programme. Given the central role of scientific and technological developments in outer space in implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, South Africa prioritized the development of space science and technology, with international cooperation as the cornerstone. In that connection, the implementation of the 2016 African Space Policy and Strategy relied on international cooperation and the mobilization of domestic resources in African countries. His Government looked forward to working bilaterally and multilaterally to implement that strategy, which would significantly increase African States' participation in space activities. By bridging the digital divide affecting African countries, space science and technology applications were essential for their sustainable growth, economic development and poverty alleviation.

5. Welcoming the progress made by COPUOS in developing voluntary, non-binding guidelines to promote safe, sustainable and secure outer space activities, he stressed that such guidelines could only be developed through a multilateral approach within the United Nations system, and called on all countries to participate actively and positively in reaching a final agreement on them before the mandate of the working group expired, coinciding with the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE+50) process in 2018.

6. Participating actively in COPUOS, South Africa would serve as Chair of its Scientific and Technical Subcommittee for 2018–2019, and was also involved in developing themes for the historic UNISPACE+50 celebrations, a mere six months away. With the unprecedented pace of technological developments, countries should be guided by the existing international space treaties and the principle that outer space was a global commons to benefit, and be preserved by, all nations.

7. **Mr. Al Sahhaf** (Iraq) said that as outer space had become an environment for advanced scientific, commercial and military activities, the space security issue was increasingly important. With the growing contribution of space technology and science to navigation, meteorological observation and disaster management, outer space was an essential resource for all, including non-spacefaring nations. His delegation therefore welcomed the focus on developing legal frameworks for the use of outer space, notably through COPUOS, which was leading the joint efforts to strengthen international cooperation and transparency in preventing in-space collisions and curtailing harmful space debris. Moreover, the United Nations outer space treaties established the principles of, and the authority of the Organization regarding, the common interest of all humanity in outer space, its use for the benefit of all peoples, and preventing the Moon from becoming an area of international conflict.

8. International cooperation on peaceful uses of outer space should develop space science, technology and applications and strengthen capacity-building, with COPUOS as a forum for information exchange on related activities at the national and international levels. assistance provided through Thanks to such cooperation, Iraq had been able to launch its first satellite for scientific study purposes in 2014, in collaboration with Italy, and was now working to harness the benefits of the peaceful uses of outer space in modern communications and technology, including by sending experts to train in developed countries, thereby enhancing its national capabilities, strengthening cooperation and serving humanity as a whole.

9. Despite having to wage a mortal struggle against terrorism on the entire world's behalf, Iraq had begun to utilize space applications for peaceful purposes in several areas. Free space data was being used to pinpoint attempts to tamper with crude-oil pipelines, as well as to determine the locations and trajectories of sulfur and oil fires and their resulting smoke clouds.

10. Iraq firmly opposed the militarization of outer space and any other use of outer space that would be harmful for humanity. It also reaffirmed the applicability of international law and the Charter of the United Nations in determining international liability for damage caused by space objects. In the interest of future generations, all States must provide information to the United Nations on their activities in outer space, in order to avert catastrophic accidents with potentially negative repercussions for global peace.

11. **Ms. Oku** (Japan), welcoming the achievements of COPUOS over its fifty-year existence, said that its role was increasingly important in the light of the growing number of countries participating in space-related activities. Japan would contribute to the preparation of the 2018 commemorative UNISPACE+50 conference.

12. In 2015, in collaboration with the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs, the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency had initiated a capacity-building programme enabling developing Member States to deploy microsatellites from the International Space Station's "Kibo" Japanese Experiment Module. The University of Nairobi and the Universidad del Valle de Guatemala had been the first institutions to participate. It was hoped that other developing countries would express interest.

13. Japan had launched eight spacecraft over the previous year, including a quasi-zenith four-satellite navigation system providing improved positioning and availability through shared global positioning-system signals, that would begin operating in 2018. Also noteworthy was the 113-day mission completed by a Japanese astronaut, the results of whose research on mice in orbit would contribute to treating the symptoms of aging. Japan looked forward to hosting the second International Space Exploration Forum and fruitful discussions on enhancing international cooperation on peaceful space exploration, and reaffirmed the importance of the Forum as a mechanism for coordinating global space exploration efforts and its input to contribute useful potential to the UNISPACE+50 conference.

14. **Mr. Alsuwaidi** (United Arab Emirates) said that outer space, as the legacy of humankind, should be preserved and used sustainably, hence the need for States to strengthen security and confidence-building measures and to conduct their space activities responsibly and transparently. His country was devoted to building a strong, sustainable space sector, acquiring the resources and scientific expertise needed to participate in space exploration.

15. The United Arab Emirates Space Agency had launched a national space policy embodying his Government's priorities for the development of its national space programme, and defining legal frameworks governing the outer space sector, in line with federal policies and international laws and regulations. Through that Agency, his country had cooperation agreements concluded with major international space agencies and relevant Governmental agencies. Moreover, his country was a member of COPUOS and the International Astronautical Federation, and a Party to several international treaties and conventions on international cooperation in outer space.

16. In 2020, the United Arab Emirates would host the International Astronautical Congress in Dubai and become the first Arab country to launch a probe to Mars. With 150 male and female Emirati engineers participating, the Emirates Mars Mission would contribute to scientific knowledge, and over 200 research institutions would benefit from the data gathered by the project. In addition, a simulation of life on Mars called "Mars Scientific City" was one of the important initiatives undertaken as part of the Mars 2117 project launched by his Government in 2017 to build the first human city on Mars within a hundred years.

17. Through its participation in the UNISPACE+50 conference and other forums, his Government would continue to strengthen global efforts to ensure the long-term sustainability of outer space activities. It had also hosted a high-level forum entitled "Space as a driver for socioeconomic sustainable development" in 2016 and would host its final instalment in November 2017. Further international cooperation among all stakeholders under the auspices of the Office of Outer Space Affairs, and increased private-sector participation and investment in the space industry, were desirable.

18. **Mr. Prasad** (India) said that his country was actively integrating advances in space technology and applications into national development efforts, while formulating national space legislation and building Indian law students' space-law capacity. The Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) was working with Government to use space technology to promote good governance and development. In that connection, he welcomed the United Nations Space-based Information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response (UN-SPIDER) initiative as a positive step towards implementing the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and the 2030 Agenda.

19. To enhance natural-resource management capabilities, India had successfully launched an Earthobservation satellite into a Sun-synchronous orbit in December 2016, and would also host the thirty-eighth Asian Conference on Remote Sensing in late 2017. His country's Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle had launched the South Asia Satellite (GSAT-9) in May 2017, providing a variety of communication services to countries of the region including Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives, Nepal and Sri Lanka.

20. With its focus on using space for the benefit of humankind within and outside India, his country's space programme had become an increasingly cost-effective platform available to all willing partners. In February 2017, its Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle had launched an Earth-observation satellite along with 103 co-passenger nano-satellites into a sun-synchronous orbit, followed by 30 co-passenger satellites from a number of countries, including India, in June 2017. The Indian Mars Orbiter Mission had recently completed three years orbiting that planet, and the first year's data had been released to the global scientific community. The

ASTROSAT multi-wavelength space astronomy observatory had completed two years in orbit in September 2017, and had observed some 400 celestial sources of various types to date.

21. ISRO continued to share its facilities and expertise in space science and technology applications, with some 1,600 beneficiaries in over 50 countries to date. India had concluded formal cooperation agreements with numerous countries and international organizations and was a regular participant in the Asia-Pacific Regional Space Agency Forum, hosting the Forum's twentyfourth session in November 2017.

22. Ms. Lee Hye Jin (Republic of Korea) said that for decades, COPUOS had contributed significantly to confidence enhancing transparency and and strengthening international norms and standards governing outer space. However, the international community's effort to establish an enhanced spacegovernance framework was not keeping pace with the rapid evolution of space science and applications. Noting the important work of COPUOS to develop guidelines for the long-term sustainability of outer space activities, she looked forward to the adoption of those guidelines by consensus before June 2018.

23. The UNISPACE+50 commemorative conference would offer an opportunity to strengthen cooperation and governance of outer space activities and to consider how they could address overarching, long-term development concerns. Her delegation welcomed the progress made under the seven UNISPACE+50 thematic priorities and looked forward to a comprehensive "Space2030" agenda for the contribution of space applications to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. COPUOS must reiterate its commitment to the peaceful uses of outer space, and must not be allowed to co-exist with any development in prohibited activities.

24. All responsible members of the international community were committed to the peaceful uses of outer space. However, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea continued to flagrantly violate relevant Security Council resolutions explicitly prohibiting it from developing any ballistic missile technology and engaging in any related activities. It had already launched 19 ballistic missiles in 2017, including two with intercontinental range. Any attempts by that Government to justify its prohibited launch activities as exercising its right to peaceful use of outer space would fail to deceive the Committee. The Republic of Korea would continue to contribute to the international community's efforts to ensure that space activities promoted global peace, safety and security, enhanced

the well-being of people all over the world and were sustainable over the long term.

25. Mr. Hodgkins (United States of America), noting the progress made by the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee and its Working Group on the Long-term Sustainability of Space Activities, said that his Government was pleased that in 2016 COPUOS had reached agreement on a first set of 12 guidelines for the long-term sustainability of outer space activities, representing best practices for the safe and responsible use of space. That milestone underscored the role of COPUOS in fostering international cooperation and ensuring that all nations could continue to benefit from the use of outer space in the long term. Nations should start thinking about how they intended to implement those guidelines at the national level. His delegation hoped that COPUOS members would continue working cooperatively to ensure that the Working Group reached its goal of submitting full long-term sustainability guidelines for approval by the General Assembly in 2018.

26. COPUOS and its Legal Subcommittee had a distinguished history of promoting space exploration by developing space law through consensus. That Subcommittee had played a key role in establishing the main treaties on outer space, under which space exploration and utilization by nations, international organizations and private entities had flourished, enabling space technology and services to contribute immeasurably to economic growth and improved quality of life around the world. The Legal Subcommittee had a adopted a report of the Working Group on the Review of International Mechanisms for Cooperation in the Peaceful Exploration and Use of Outer Space, identifying lessons learned from more than half a century of international cooperation in that regard. That report would assist Member States as they considered mechanisms facilitating future cooperative endeavours in the peaceful uses of outer space, and was particularly timely since it coincided with the fiftieth anniversary of the Outer Space Treaty.

27. In June 2018, COPUOS would commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of UNISPACE. The Committee had contributed extensively to fostering international cooperation in space activities, and that event would provide an opportunity to consider the current situation, the seven UNISPACE+50 thematic priorities, and the Committee's future role at a time when both Governmental and non-governmental actors were increasingly involved in outer space activities.

28. In raising awareness of the benefits of space exploration and innovation, the UNISPACE+50 priority

entitled "Global partnership in space exploration and innovation" was of particular interest to his country, which was pleased to be co-leading, with China and Jordan, an Action Team on Space Exploration and Innovation. That Team had drafted a report on the importance of international cooperation and the role of commercial space activities in propelling human use of outer space.

29. For nearly six decades, COPUOS had focused on building a consensus to advance the peaceful exploration and use of outer space for the benefit of all humanity. As the only standing body of the United Nations concerned exclusively with the peaceful uses of outer space, COPUOS had been extremely successful in fostering international cooperation to that end. While other United Nations bodies, including the First Committee, considered disarmament and internationalsecurity matters relating to outer space, COPUOS promoted cooperation on space exploration and the sharing of its benefits. The joint meeting of the First and Fourth Committees on challenges to space security and sustainability would provide a unique opportunity for improved coordination on transparency and confidencebuilding measures for outer space activities. His delegation was also pleased to co-sponsor the draft decision of Canada on the composition of the bureaux of COPUOS for the 2018–2019 biennium.

30. Mr. Kim In Ryong (Democratic People's Republic of Korea), citing the international trend towards encouraging economic development through space exploration, said that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea was also developing its peaceful outer space activities under the coordinated leadership of the State. Since launching its first communication satellite in 1998, the country had made great leaps in spacetechnology development and now possessed world-level satellite-delivery capabilities. The country's practical satellite development began in February 2016 with the Kwangmyongsong 4 launch, and the September 2016 static firing test of a new high-thrust engine for geostationary-satellite launch vehicles had increased space-exploration options; moreover, the successful ground jet test of a new Korean-style high-thrust jet engine in March 2017 constituted a technological breakthrough. Under the national five-year plan for outer space development, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea would launch many more practical satellites. including geostationary satellites. contributing to socioeconomic development.

31. As a Party to several space treaties, his country actively sought peaceful, legitimate development of outer space under the principles of equality and mutual benefit, while paying deep attention to international

exchanges and cooperation in that field. Nevertheless, the United States persisted in its attempts to block his country's space-science development, levelling the ridiculous charge that such activities violated Security Council resolutions. Those resolutions were illegal, and it was preposterous for the country which had launched the greatest number of satellites to claim that satellite launches by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea threatened international peace and security. The United States was advocating double standards; yet, according to the Outer Space Treaty, outer space was a common asset of mankind to be used by all States without discrimination. Thus, blocking the peaceful and lawful launch of satellites by his country infringed upon its sovereign rights under international law. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea would continue its efforts to strengthen international cooperation in the artificial satellite field and to pursue its peaceful outer space development.

32. **Ms. Schneider Calza** (Brazil) said that all countries, regardless of their state of development, were equally entitled to explore outer space in order to foster their development. UNISPACE+50 would provide a unique opportunity for Member States to discuss, reflect and act to ensure that space activities played a crucial role in fostering development and creating better living conditions on Earth.

33. Brazil encouraged and participated in joint spaceexploration development projects, since they promoted the sharing of expertise. In 2016, Brazil had launched, in cooperation with France, the Defence and Strategic Communications Geostationary Satellite, promoting digital social inclusion by providing internet services to the entire country. In 2017, in support of international efforts to mitigate space debris, it had inaugurated a space-debris detection station of the Panoramic Electro-Optical system in partnership with the Russian Federation. Brazil and China already operated the CBERS-4 remote-sensing satellite jointly and had agreed to construct a new satellite, the CBERS-4A. Brazil had also launched the UbatubaSat microsatellite with Japan. Moreover, the National Institute for Space Research (INPE) organized scientific events in Brazil in collaboration with Japan, Italy, China and Canada, and further cooperation was planned with Germany, China, the United States and the United Kingdom.

34. Brazil was also active in capacity-building for the peaceful uses of outer space and had hosted a southern hemisphere forum on that topic in collaboration with China in 2017. Furthermore, a symposium on basic space technology, co-organized by the Office for Outer Space Affairs and INPE, would take place in Natal in September 2018.

35. The Committee should decide, during the current session, on the composition of COPUOS bureaux for the period 2018–2019. Brazil had been endorsed by the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States to chair COPUOS in 2019 and, as Chair, would commit its best efforts to advance cooperation and protect the space environment while creating opportunities to benefit all humankind.

36. Mr. Zambrano Ortiz (Ecuador) said that in the context of UNISPACE+50, Ecuador advocated greater collaboration among States to develop responsible space-application programmes for the common good, thereby increasing developing countries' access to outer space activities. Given the country's high risk of natural disasters, it also continued to support UN-SPIDER, a key tool for providing early warning, mitigation and relief for such events, whose increasing frequency resulted in negative social, economic and environmental impacts internationally. Intensified capacity-building and collaboration efforts with developing countries would therefore provide greater international stability, leaving no one behind. Moreover, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Reduction 2015-2030 had highlighted the importance of leveraging space science for disaster management and emergency response, for such broader goals as sustainable development and poverty eradication.

37. In addition to contributing to those broader goals, technology could bolster environmental space protection. Consequently, Ecuador firmly endorsed the link between effective universal use of space science and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; the Ecuadorian Space Institute had been collaborating internationally in that field for over five years. Results of that collaboration included the positive effect of the work of the national Centre for the Integrated Surveying of Natural Resources by means of Remote Sensing (CLIRSEN) on agricultural production. Space technology could also improve urban planning and management; thus Ecuador welcomed the adoption of the New Urban Agenda at the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III).

38. **Mr. Abbani** (Algeria) said that his Government had adopted a national space programme in 2006 and was developing the country's industrial capacities and meeting national requirements in theoretical knowledge and practical applications. Intensified activities under that programme in 2016 included the successful launch of three satellites, which had strengthened national earth-observation capacities and promoted sustainable development by protecting the environment and various ecosystems, monitoring desertification and land use, and preventing and managing natural disasters. Spaceapplication development projects included training, research, and using natural-resource satellite imagery for tracking forest fires and for town planning.

39. Algeria supported all initiatives promoting inter-African cooperation in space applications and technologies for sustainable development on the continent, and had contributed to finalizing the African Union Space Policy and Strategy adopted in 2015. It was also participating in Office for Outer Space Affairs efforts to develop a scientific, technical and legal framework in Africa and other regions. Algeria and South Africa were finalizing a joint-development project for their respective earth-observation satellites in the African Resources Management Satellite Constellation, aimed at contributing to the discovery and management of resources required for regional development and anti-poverty efforts. Algeria hosted the UN-SPIDER Regional Support Office for naturaldisaster management for the region's countries.

40. Algeria reaffirmed the importance of defining outer space and its relation to national airspace to prevent and manage potential conflicts; ensuring fair access to orbital positions based on the peaceful use and non-appropriation of outer space, rather than on a "firstcome, first-served" basis; tackling space-debris dangers without hampering the emerging capacities of developing countries through voluntary implementation of the Inter-Agency Space Debris Coordination Committee Space Debris (IADC) Mitigation Guidelines; introducing a regulatory framework for high-resolution satellite-data commercialization to prevent misuse; the recognition by COPUOS of developing countries' concerns in order to assist their development in that area; and the active participation of COPUOS in preventing an arms race in space.

41. **Mr. Poudel Chhetri** (Nepal) said that all countries, irrespective of size and economic or scientific development level, should have equal access to space technology. Such access should be particularly encouraged for least-developed and landlocked developing countries, since they had not yet benefited proportionately from space activities. Space-science applications for satellite communications, remote sensing, land use, navigation technology and disaster-information management could improve people's lives, conserve natural resources, enhance disaster mitigation, and promote sustainable development.

42. Nepal was working closely with the Office for Outer Space Affairs, with which it had organized and hosted a workshop on global-navigation satellite systems applications in Kathmandu in 2016. In future, the Office should actively build space-institutions capacity in least-developed countries to ensure that they had ample space-technology resources for their sustainable development. His Government hoped that cooperation between the Office and the new Technology Bank for the Least Developed Countries would advance the attainment of Sustainable Development Goals in the countries furthest behind.

43. **Mr. Dzonzi** (Malawi) said that space technology was of vital importance in disaster management and had proved invaluable when his country had suffered the worst flood in its history in 2015. The Office for Outer Space Affairs had assisted Malawi in accessing satellite images of the affected areas, enabling it to plan evacuation routes and assess impact.

44. Greater international cooperation in sharing technical assistance and geospatial information would help developing countries use space science for the welfare of their communities. In that regard, Malawi, an agriculture-dependent country, had benefited greatly from technical support, training sessions and satellite data provided by developed countries. With support from the Government of Austria, UN-SPIDER and the United Nations Programme on Space Applications had visited Malawi in 2013, and the knowledge shared during that visit had remained vital to his country's agriculture.

45. The increase in space debris resulting from unregulated space technology was concerning, since it posed a danger to sensitive space equipment and the International Space Station. Moreover, the militarization of outer space was incompatible with international agreements and the 2030 Agenda. Accordingly, at a time of heightened global strategic tensions, relative insularity and diverse vested interests, legally-binding instruments Malawi hoped for guaranteeing transparency, information sharing and responsible space activities, to ensure the sustainable and peaceful use of outer space for all humankind.

46. Archbishop Auza (Observer for the Holy See) said that growing space activity had brought an alarming increase in space pollution, defiling outer space with chemical effluents and biological debris. and radioactive contamination. Caring for the environment, rather than exploiting it greedily, was a moral fundamental imperative and а principle of intergenerational solidarity. All human activities took place in symbiotic interaction with the environment; therefore, an environmental crisis meant a crisis for humanity, and all humankind had a duty of responsible stewardship. Better norms protecting outer space, particularly norms combating the growing problem of space pollution, were urgently needed. Timely development of new treaties and guidelines and establishing an appropriate agency would protect outer space and Earth from further degradation, for the health of the planet and the good of all humanity.

#### Statements made in exercise of the right of reply

47. **Mr. Kim** In Ryong (Democratic People's Republic of Korea), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that his delegation rejected all of the baseless allegations made by the representative of South Korea regarding his country's outer space development activities, which were peaceful in every respect and did not violate any Security Council resolutions. Making an issue of his country's use of ballistic rockets for peaceful satellite launches was an act of provocation.

48. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea currently had sufficient space development capacity to launch all kinds of working satellites, including communications and observatory satellites. To manage its rapidly-developing outer space capacity, his Government had adopted national outer space development legislation in 2013, and had acceded to the relevant treaties and agreements on the peaceful uses of outer space.

49. By criticizing its peaceful satellite launches, South Korea was violating his country's rights as a sovereign State. Ironically, South Korea used outer space for military purposes, allowing the United States to base a missile defence system on its territory. Given that ballistic rocket technology was used to launch satellites, Security Council resolutions prohibiting its use denied his country's legitimate right to develop its outer space affairs, as recognized by international law. His country was subject to a preposterous double standard, including economic sanctions based on unlawful fabrications designed to isolate the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and stifle its development. No laws stipulated that the use of ballistic rocket technology to launch satellites posed a threat to international peace and security. If the satellite launches of his country were considered a threat, so should the satellite launches of many other countries. His country would therefore continue to exercise its sovereign right to develop outer space activities.

50. **Ms. Lee** Hye Jin (Republic of Korea), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that North Korea was not pursuing outer space development to develop its economy and improve the living conditions of its people. In fact, 4.6 million people in North Korea lived in basic food insecurity, while the Government continued to spend 30 million dollars per satellite

launch. Recent Security Council resolutions had expressed concern that the prohibited activities of North Korea had generated revenue that was in turn diverted to ballistic missiles and nuclear weapons while the basic needs of the country's citizens went unmet.

51. **Mr. Kim** In Ryong (Democratic People's Republic of Korea), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that the representative of South Korea was not qualified to discuss his country's legitimate and peaceful uses of outer space, and that her statements were no more than groundless accusations intended to tarnish his country's image. The peaceful use of outer space was recognized by international law as a legitimate right for all sovereign States. South Korea should stop following the lead of other countries with its constant criticism of his country.

# Draft resolution A/C.4/72/L.2: International cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space

52. **Mr. Kendall** (Canada), speaking as Chair of the COPUOS Working Group of the Whole, introduced the revised text of draft resolution A/C.4/72/L.2, for consideration by the Committee.

53. Draft resolution A/C.4/72/L.2, as orally revised, was adopted.

Draft resolution A/C.4/72/L.3: Declaration on the fiftieth anniversary of the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies

54. **Mr. Kendall** (Canada) introduced the revised text of draft resolution A/C.4/72/L.3, as agreed by the Working Group of the Whole, for consideration by the Committee.

55. Draft resolution A/C.4/72/L.3, as orally revised, was adopted.

Draft resolution A/C.4/72/L.4: Consideration of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space

56. Draft resolution A/C.4/72/L.4 was adopted.

Draft decision A/C.4/72/L.8: Election of officers nominated for the bureaux of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and its subsidiary bodies for the period 2018–2019

57. **Mr. Grant** (Canada), speaking on behalf of the 42 sponsors of the draft decision, said that a positive vote was vital to ensure the continued operation of COPUOS during the crucial lead-up to the fiftieth anniversary of

UNISPACE+50 and development of the Guidelines on the long-term sustainability of outer space activities. Member States were therefore strongly encouraged to adopt A/C.4/72/L.8 immediately.

58. **Ms. Sharma** (Secretary of the Committee) said that Argentina, Belgium, Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kiribati, Latvia, Luxembourg, Malta, Micronesia (Federated States of), Montenegro, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Romania, Singapore, Spain, Sweden, and Switzerland had joined as sponsors.

59. **Mr. Sandoval Mendiolea** (Mexico) said that it was important to ensure the continuity of the work of COPUOS at that pivotal moment by endorsing the candidates selected by the regional groups. COPUOS had demonstrated its confidence in the Committee by entrusting it with such a significant decision.

60. **The Chair** said that Saudi Arabia, on behalf of the Arab Group, and the Syrian Arab Republic had requested a recorded vote.

61. **Ms. Radwan** (Saudi Arabia), speaking on behalf of the Arab Group, said that the draft decision set a poor precedent, as the candidates nominated by the five regional groups had traditionally been approved by consensus two years before they assumed their respective responsibilities. The group of Western European and Other States had presented a nonconsensual candidate, Israel, for the Second Vice-Chairman and Rapporteur of COPUOS, which went against the established procedures outlined in document A/58/20. The most recent COPUOS report made no mention of the nomination of Israel or of the lack of consensus regarding that nomination.

62. Her delegation opposed the draft decision, which went against the rules of procedure and attempted to circumvent the desires of Member States. Moreover, the behaviour of Israel as an occupying Power ran counter to the peaceful uses of outer space. Israel engaged in nuclear and military activities with a total lack of transparency, and refused to accede to any relevant international agreements; its nomination would have negative repercussions for the work of the Committee, breeding distrust amongst Member States. Given that Israel did not abide by any legitimate international resolutions and continued to occupy Arab territories in violation of international law, involving it in the work of the Committee stripped the Committee of its legitimacy and called into question the credibility of the countries supporting its candidacy. Reiterating its support for COPUOS, her delegation called on all

Member States to preserve transparency and the spirit of consensus by voting against the draft decision.

63. **Mr. Arcia Vivas** (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) said that his delegation opposed the draft decision, which concerned an internal COPUOS outside the scope of Committee consideration. There was a lack of transparency surrounding how the draft decision had come before the Committee. Any action taken by the Committee would contravene the consensus negotiation process that had been the COPUOS standard since 1962. As COPUOS membership was much smaller than that of the General Assembly, approving the draft decision would allow non-members of COPUOS unprecedented influence over its internal functioning. COPUOS should revise its working methods to improve the membership election process for its bureaux.

64. Mr. Mounzer (Syrian Arab Republic) said that his delegation categorically rejected the nomination of Israel as COPUOS Second Vice-Chair and Rapporteur. Far from politicizing the work of the Committee, that rejection was in fact founded on legal rather than political arguments. Israel had committed many crimes against Syrians and Palestinians during its decades-long occupation of lands belonging to other States Members, in violation of the Charter and principles of international law; that occupation alone should bar Israel from membership in any United Nations committee or body. Israel must instead be expelled from the United Nations. General Assembly resolution A/RES/273 (III) of 1949 had set out the conditions for Israeli membership in the United Nations, including recognition of the State of Palestine and the return of Palestinian refugees to their homes. Sixty-nine years later, Israeli officials openly bragged that they had not fulfilled those requirements and continued to resettle people in the Occupied Territories.

Consideration of Israel for a COPUOS Bureau 65. position presented an inherent contradiction and raised questions regarding that country's true intentions. While COPUOS focused on the peaceful uses of outer space, Israel possessed a great arsenal of nuclear weapons and refused to accede to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction or the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction. As an occupying Power, Israel had not met the requirements to join the United Nations, let alone to become part of a committee bureau. Before submitting its candidacy for any such office, Israel must respect the Charter and relevant resolutions and end its occupation of all Arab territories in Lebanon, Syria and Palestine.

#### 66. A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Albania, Andorra, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Chad, Chile, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Kenya, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Myanmar, Namibia, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Palau, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, San Marino, Serbia, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, Tuvalu, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Uruguay, Viet Nam, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

### Against:

Algeria, Bahrain, Djibouti, Egypt, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Maldives, Mauritania, Morocco, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Yemen.

### Abstaining:

Bangladesh, China, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Ghana, Kazakhstan, Malaysia.

67. Draft decision A/C.4/72/L.8 was adopted by 124 votes to 22, with 6 abstentions.

68. **Ms. Sayed** (Pakistan) said that her delegation's vote in favour of the draft decision, based on the desire to uphold the established practice of endorsing nominations made by the regional groups, must not be

construed as a shift in its continued support for the Palestinian people and their struggle.

69. **Ms. Furman** (Israel), expressing regret over the events that had led to a vote on the draft decision, said that COPUOS should remain an apolitical body; unfortunately, Member States had witnessed yet another cynical attempt by the Arab Group to politicize it. Israel remained ready to cooperate with all peace-loving nations on space research and discovery with a view to achieving a more sustainable future.

70. Mr. Matinrazm (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that under the normal COPUOS procedure, agreement on the composition of the bureaux should have been reached transparently by consensus at its annual meeting in Vienna and included in the report presented to the Committee. Moreover, given that two of the main goals of COPUOS were to promote cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space and to prevent its militarization, the nomination of Israel was counterproductive, as that country's long history of aggression and militarization did not contribute to achieving those lofty goals. His delegation therefore strongly objected to the election of Israel.

71. **Mr. Tito** (Kiribati) said that although his delegation was sensitive to political considerations, it nonetheless favoured resolving such issues as rapidly as possible. Time was of crucial importance for the people of the Pacific, who saw increasing pollution in the night sky. His Government was concerned about space litter and climate change, problems caused by unchecked industrialization which disproportionately affected small Pacific island States. Kiribati had therefore voted in favour of the draft decision.

The meeting rose at 6.25 p.m.