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COMMITTEE ON THE PEACEFUL
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Agenda items 5 and 16 (a)

THIRD UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON THE PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE (UNISPACE III)

Statement by the Chairman of the Group of 77

Working paper submitted by the Group of 77**

The Group of 77, together with China, has reviewed the report by the Secretariat entitled “Matters relating to the planning of the special session of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE III)” (A/AC.105/662) and wishes to address the date, the financial aspect, the schedule of meetings and the agenda of the conference.

Two alternative months were proposed by the Secretariat as dates for UNISPACE III: June or August. The Group of 77 does not favour August as the month the conference should be held because it is a month usually reserved for the holidays in Austria and, more importantly, a period of time when many permanent missions are preparing for the General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). In addition, the Group of 77 would like the Secretariat to coordinate, with the other international organizations based in Vienna, the schedule of meetings so that no other meeting of IAEA, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization or the United Nations Office at Vienna will overlap with UNISPACE III.

* This document has not been formally edited.

** The views expressed in the statement were also shared by China.

Regarding the financial aspects, the Group of 77 considers that UNISPACE III should have sufficient resources so that financial constraints will not become an impediment to the conference. The Group of 77 calls upon Member States and international organizations to make voluntary contributions in the form of cash, human and other in-kind resources that would be utilized in the activities planned for UNISPACE III.

The Group of 77 has examined the meeting pattern of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and its subsidiary bodies proposed by the Secretariat for the year in which UNISPACE III will take place (A/AC.105/662, paragraph 21). According to this proposal the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee will meet for five days in early February; the Legal Subcommittee will follow immediately afterwards for a period of eight days; the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space will meet for three days in early April and UNISPACE III will take place in June or August (depending on the decision taken this year by the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee). The Group of 77 can agree, in principle, with this proposal.

Last year the Group of 77 submitted a proposal to the Subcommittee containing a possible agenda for a third UNISPACE conference. On this occasion, the Group of 77 wishes to recall some of the relevant aspects of its proposal that will have to be addressed by the respective Working Group of this Subcommittee. These are:

- That the agenda should be focused, well balanced and consistent with the interests and needs of all countries;
- That the central themes should address: advancement in space science and technologies; applications of space science and technology and their dissemination; enhancing international cooperation in the utilization of space technology and applications; and promoting the economic efficiency and commercial benefits resulting from developments in space science and technology;
- That particular emphasis should be put on the opportunities and means for increased international cooperation in view of major developments in space science and technology; and, among others, that the expanded participation of all countries in major international initiatives related to outer space is necessary;
- The Group of 77 also considers that the recommendations of the Conference should be limited in number, sharply focused, and of significant impact on the social and economic development of all countries.

These are just some of the issues contained in the proposal. The Group of 77 is looking forward to the task ahead and wishes to offer its input for the important discussion on UNISPACE III.