



General Assembly

Seventy-first session

Official Records

Distr.: General
21 November 2016

Original: English

Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee)

Summary record of the 9th meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Thursday, 13 October 2016, at 10 a.m.

Chair: Mr. Benard Estrada (Vice-Chair) (Guatemala)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Agenda item 48: International cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space (A/71/20 and A/C.4/71/L.2) (continued)

1. **Mr. Lenoir** (Observer for the European Union), speaking also on behalf of the candidate countries Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey; the stabilization and association process country Bosnia and Herzegovina; and, in addition, Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova, said that outer space was a global common good that should be used peacefully for the benefit of mankind.

2. The European Union was a major player in outer space affairs; its space policy priorities included global navigation and earth observation, space research and space sustainability. In 1998, it had established Copernicus, a user-driven earth observation and monitoring programme under civilian control which provided free data and services and was a crucial tool in the development of policies on climate and the environment, maritime safety and security, agriculture, disaster management, urban planning and infrastructure. Copernicus had become invaluable to crisis managers, civil protection authorities, humanitarian aid actors and those involved in preparedness and recovery activities, and its activities were carried out in coordination with international partners, including the United Nations Platform for Space-based Information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response (UN-SPIDER). The European Organisation for the Exploitation of Meteorological Satellites had developed projects designed to facilitate operational access to meteorological and climate-related information for all African countries. The projects also involved the provision of data acquisition and processing facilities, and training and capacity-building activities.

3. The European Union's Horizon 2020 programme addressed sustainable development, climate change and other global challenges through research, innovation, and international cooperation. The European Union was open to bilateral and international cooperation on space issues and had participated in relevant international organizations and discussions, concluded cooperation agreements, and participated in bilateral policy dialogues designed to strengthen space research cooperation.

4. The surge in the use of outer space had been accompanied by an increase in orbital debris and potentially destructive collisions, which highlighted the importance of greater international cooperation in the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes. Given the importance the European Union attached to the preservation of a safe and secure space environment and the peaceful use of outer space on an equitable and mutually acceptable basis, it had created a framework to support the delivery of space-debris surveillance and tracking services.

5. The European Union had proposed an international code of conduct for outer space activities designed to contribute to their security, safety and sustainability. Its long-term goals were to increase international cooperation in space, establish standards of responsible behaviour across the full range of space activity, establish non-interference commitments in the peaceful exploration and use of outer space, facilitate equitable access to outer space and increase the transparency of space activities. Those goals could be achieved through the adoption of a non-legally binding agreement negotiated within the United Nations. The European Union remained an active global partner in space-related issues and, in 2016, it expected to adopt a new space strategy that would set out Europe's space ambitions and its plans for working with others to promote and protect the sustainable and peaceful use of space by all nations.

6. **Mr. Rivero Rosario** (Cuba) said that the international community should take measures to prevent outer space from becoming the next setting for an arms race, since such a militarization would be a major threat to humanity. The only means of prevention was to adopt international legal norms specifically prohibiting the placement of weapons — particularly nuclear weapons — in outer space. Member States should negotiate and adopt a legal instrument regulating the peaceful uses of outer space, after constructive dialogue among the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS), its Legal Subcommittee and the Conference on Disarmament. As the only multilateral negotiating forum on disarmament, the Conference must play a primary role in preventing the militarization of outer space. The definition and delimitation of outer space was becoming more imperative. The Legal Subcommittee should focus on the theoretical aspects of the topic and

on gaps in space law, rather than — as some States argued — limiting itself to practical aspects, which might actually provide a platform for the possible militarization of outer space. Cuba welcomed the efforts of the Russian Federation and China as well as of the Working Group on Long-Term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities, which had all contributed to the completion of a set of relevant guidelines.

7. The geostationary orbit was a limited natural resource at risk of saturation. Its exceptional potential for use in universally beneficial social programmes should not be diminished by the unbridled commercialization of outer space by some States and private actors: the scenario in which the many paid for the indiscriminate use and abuse of resources by the few — as had occurred with the environment — must be avoided with outer space. Cuba condemned the misuse of the orbit through the use of spy satellites to obtain information detrimental to other nations and reiterated its concern about the increasing number of such satellites, which collided with other space objects and created more space debris. The mitigation of space debris was vital to the future of space activities. Equitable access to outer space must be guaranteed to all Member States, irrespective of their level of scientific or economic development, with special consideration given to the needs and interests of developing countries.

8. Despite economic difficulties caused mainly by the cruel economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed on his country, Cuba attached importance to the space sciences and their application, in particular in the forecasting of natural disasters, risk assessment. Early warning systems were crucial and Cuba, having gained significant experience in that area, had shared its expertise with countries in the region.

9. Although all States had the right to the peaceful use of outer space, that remained a pipe dream for most developing countries. International cooperation was thus all the more urgent, particularly in the areas of information exchange, capacity-building and technology transfer. COPUOS was the ideal platform for international cooperation in space technology applications in areas that included food security, water, resource management and disaster management.

10. **Ms. Otto** (Palau) said that the failure to manage outer space sustainably and the use of outer space for

non-peaceful purposes could have catastrophic consequences for all countries regardless of their level of development. As a small-island developing State, Palau had virtually no capacity to participate in space exploration or the development of space science and technology, but it was nonetheless reaping the benefits of space technology in areas such as transportation, communications, weather forecasting and the remote surveillance of its exclusive economic zone.

11. Palau welcomed the report by COPUOS, in particular its progress in developing guidelines for the long-term sustainability of outer space activities. It also welcomed the consensus reached on the first set of guidelines and urged Committee members to step up efforts to complete the second set before the fiftieth anniversary of the first United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE) in 2018. In the meantime, States should follow the example of those countries that had moved forward with the implementation of the first set. The guidelines should be seen as a step towards the longer-term work of negotiating a legally binding agreement on the peaceful use of outer space. Her delegation welcomed the proposal to hold a joint session of the First and Fourth Committees in 2017 for the purpose of enhancing cooperation on outer space activities. The events to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of UNISPACE would hopefully signal a new era of enhanced cooperation towards the peaceful and sustainable use of outer space for the benefit of all.

12. **Mr. Mana** (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, the promising outlook was becoming increasingly bleak as a result of the militarization of space and the arms race among certain Powers, as well as the proliferation of space debris. Military space activities posed a threat to peace, international security and the survival of humanity.

13. The international community should give serious thought to how 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 be carried out for the benefit of 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 comprising five multilateral treaties 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.

14. Cameroon respected the principle of the peaceful use of outer space and promoted international cooperation to that end, taking into account the needs of developing countries or those facing massive refugee inflows and other specific challenges, as well as those requiring assistance in areas such as weather forecasting and telemedicine.

15. **Mr. Ilnytskyi** (Ukraine) said that the strategic role of COPUOS in shaping international standards for space activities should be strengthened and there should be greater coordination between Member States and the United Nations system on space science and technology. International cooperation and the active engagement of all countries were vital to ensure the sustainability of outer space activities, and the militarization of outer space must be prevented. Space technology constituted an indispensable tool for long-term sustainable development, and his delegation attached great importance to UN-SPIDER as a means of enhancing international cooperation in disaster management and emergency response through greater access to and use of space-based services for all countries. His delegation noted with satisfaction the progress made by the International Committee on Global Navigation Satellite Systems towards achieving compatibility and interoperability among global and regional space-based positioning, navigation and timing systems.

16. Ukraine supported international cooperation on peaceful uses of outer space and had engaged in fruitful dialogue and practical cooperation with other Member States, including the United States and Kazakhstan. In addition, the Government exchanged information with the European Union and shared advanced space technologies. Legislative provisions on international space law should be improved in order to effectively respond to current challenges. It was also important to

expand the number of States party to existing international treaties governing the uses of outer space. Work on the codification of international space law should begin, and Ukraine was committed to the drafting of a comprehensive convention on space law.

17. **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 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 successful 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 in a spirit of cooperation to develop additional long-term sustainability guidelines over the next two years so as to have a compendium of those guidelines ready for approval by the General Assembly in 2018.

18. In October 2016, the United States would co-host an event in Washington, D.C. on international best practices for outer space sustainability, which would bring together top space policy experts from Governments, industry and academia to discuss the current state of the guidelines for the long-term sustainability of outer space activities, national implementation strategies and the next steps for the international community to take to ensure that space was sustainable in the long-term.

19. COPUOS and its Legal Subcommittee had a distinguished history of developing space law through consensus in a way that promoted space exploration. That Subcommittee had played a key role in establishing the main treaties on outer space, under which space exploration by nations, international organizations and private entities had flourished. As a result, space technology and services had contributed immeasurably to economic growth and improved quality of life around the world. The Legal Subcommittee's Working Group had continued to make substantial progress and, in accordance with its multi-

year work plan, the Subcommittee had continued to take stock of the range of international cooperative mechanisms employed by Member States with a view to developing an understanding of the collaborative mechanisms implemented by States and international organizations, including when and why different mechanisms were favoured. That information would assist Member States as they considered relevant mechanisms to facilitate future cooperative endeavours in the peaceful uses of outer space and would be particularly timely because the final year for the consideration of that agenda item, 2017, coincided with the fiftieth anniversary of the Outer Space Treaty.

20. COPUOS and its subcommittees continued to make significant progress in promoting international space cooperation. For nearly six decades, the Committee 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. Other United Nations bodies, including the First Committee, were specifically competent to consider disarmament and international security matters relating to outer space, whereas COPUOS offered a forum to promote 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 confidence-building measures for outer space activities.

21. **Mr. Zamora Rivas** (El Salvador) said that the use of outer space was an opportunity to strengthen technical and human capacities and contribute to sustainable development in a manner that benefited all countries, including developing ones. His delegation supported measures to preserve outer space as a zone of peaceful development, prevent its militarization and promote international cooperation. His Government urged those countries with well-developed exploration capacities to share their knowledge.

22. Outer space should be used with the aim of improving the space environment for use by all countries equally, and space technology should serve the world's people in areas such as education, health,

disaster prevention, climate monitoring, food security and agriculture. Furthermore, in the interest of international cooperation, all countries should have access to technical assistance and technology transfer, irrespective of their economic situation, as outer space was part of the heritage of humanity.

23. El Salvador aspired to use space technology more actively in its efforts to adapt to climate change, especially in its areas of greatest environmental vulnerability, such as water resources, agriculture and coastal areas. His Government hoped to apply the contributions of space science and technology to the management of natural disasters, environmental protection, tele-health and tele-education with a view to improving its levels of human, economic and social development. Since joining COPUOS in 2015, El Salvador had been assembling a team of representatives of various institutions and ministries to serve as a counterpart to the entity.

24. During the visit by the Director of the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs to El Salvador in July 2016, his Government and the Office had concluded a cooperation agreement on space exploration and the use of outer space. In that connection, his delegation welcomed the contributions of UN-SPIDER to strengthening early warning systems and emergency response and its adoption of measures to prevent and mitigate disasters. In closing, his delegation looked forward to the first High-level Forum on Space as a Driver for Socioeconomic Sustainable Development, to be held in November 2016, and was certain that the benefits of space technology would be crucial to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

25. **Mr. Emvula** (Namibia) said that outer space technology played an increasingly important role in people's daily lives. Namibia supported the African space policy and strategy adopted by the Assembly of the African Union in January 2016. As one of the least densely populated countries in the world, Namibia contained vast plains inhabited by rare species; outer space technology was an important tool that could assist his country in spatial planning and the conservation of animals and deserts. Namibia had declared its entire coastline a conservation area and had a vested interest in using technology to preserve those areas not just for the future of Namibian youth

but for the entire planet. Those areas were at risk as a result of the grim realities of climate change. As a result, cooperation among States was vital to prevent global temperature increases, as set out in the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, which Namibia had ratified in September 2016.

26. There were many other ways in which outer space technology could benefit humanity peacefully and globally. Agricultural planning and crop monitoring, water resource management, adaptation and mitigation, rural and urban planning, disaster management and response, and global navigation and communications, among other applications, could all enable and support sustainable development and contribute positively to the achievement of the sustainable development agenda. Peaceful uses of outer space could also enhance the efforts of many African countries, including Namibia, to combat poaching of their rare rhino and elephant species and other endangered flora and fauna, which were not only major attractions for international tourism, but also contributed to the sustainable and diversified development of their economies.

27. Space tools were an important means of implementing development objectives and goals. Access to information and the ability to use data to support decision-making at all levels were absolutely fundamental. However, in order to ensure that everyone could benefit from that potentially positive technology, the international community must work together to prevent its negative use. There were those who, given the possibility, would use outer space to place weapons that could cause massive harm to humanity. For that reason, the relevant international legal instruments must be strengthened to ensure the peaceful use of outer space.

28. His Government continued to encourage cross-sectoral and multilateral cooperation within the United Nations system and other forums, and to promote knowledge sharing and the development of educational synergies in that important area. Developing countries had the right to conduct research and to participate in the development of technology for the peaceful uses of outer space.

29. **Mr. Bin Momen** (Bangladesh) said that a robust international legal regime was needed to govern outer space activities, including the exploration and use of

space for peaceful purposes, with a view to ensuring shared and equitable benefits for all humankind. Bangladesh recognized that space science and technology applications could contribute to the achievement of the objectives of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

30. As a country exposed to frequent natural disasters, Bangladesh continued to reap the benefits of investments in space research and remote sensing, especially in areas such as disaster management, environmental protection, natural resources management and climate change impact monitoring. The Government was pursuing initiatives to foster economic growth and inclusive public service delivery with the help of information and communications technology, and was aware of the increasing importance of collaboration on and investments in space technologies, including satellite communication, Earth observations systems and satellite navigation systems.

31. The Government had recently completed the necessary groundwork for its own communication satellite, which it hoped to launch by the end of 2017. That first project, which was partly financed by its own resources, marked his country's entry into outer space and was being implemented with the help of France, the Russian Federation, the United States and, above all, the International Telecommunication Union. Properly coordinated, that satellite should be able to provide services to all South Asian countries, as well as a number of countries in Southeast and Central Asia. The Government, along with its telecommunications regulatory authority, was working on setting up a public limited venture to manage the commercial operations of the satellite.

32. With regard to its national-level capacity-building, Bangladesh had received assistance from a number of regional and international organizations, including the Asia-Pacific Space Cooperation Organization and the regional centres for space science and technology education. It looked forward to strengthening its engagement with the Office for Outer Space Affairs in order to develop a comprehensive national space policy and additional legislation. The Government was also considering membership in COPUOS and would appreciate support from its members in due course. COPUOS should continue considering

issues relating to the equitable allocation and sharing of space orbits and the transfer of knowledge, technology and know-how, and, in particular, the constraints faced by the least developed countries.

33. Bangladesh had consistently supported the call to prevent an arms race in outer space and for an international legally-binding instrument negotiated at the Conference on Disarmament. Transparency and confidence-building measures could play an important role in promoting the security and sustainability of space activities. Sustained efforts were needed to implement the recommendations of the United Nations Group of Governmental Experts on Transparency and Confidence-Building Measures in Outer Space Activities. There was a need for a common but differentiated responsibility among Member States to mitigate the potentially alarming impact of debris and to minimize accidents in space. In that connection, his delegation welcomed the initiative to hold a joint meeting of the First and Fourth Committees in 2017.

34. **Ms. Yoon** Seoungmee (Republic of Korea) said that space technologies and activities were becoming increasingly relevant to other areas of global governance such as sustainable development, disaster management and international peace, safety and security. Rapidly evolving space technology and growing numbers of space objects and actors meant that a suitable and up-to-date framework was required to ensure a safe, secure and sustainable space environment.

35. The Republic of Korea attached great importance to the Secretariat's plan of work for the fiftieth anniversary of UNISPACE, which offered a unique opportunity to take stock of 50 years of cooperation and development in space and chart the future of global space governance in an increasingly complex environment. In preparation for that historic event, COPUOS had engaged in vigorous debate about the need to align the decades-old legal regime with the new reality in outer space. With guidance from the General Assembly, the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee had given serious consideration to a set of guidelines that would ensure the long-term sustainability of outer space activities in the light of developments in the fields of science, technology, law, policy and security. On the basis of the Subcommittee's work, COPUOS had reached a consensus on an initial set of 12 guidelines which laid the foundation for the prosperity of current

and future outer space activities and included space debris management and monitoring, capacity-building and awareness-raising for space activities, mitigation of space weather effects and considerations for national regulatory frameworks. Her Government hoped that consensus would soon be reached on the second set of guidelines and it would work closely with all interested parties to that end. In the medium term, it was important to develop a clear procedure for reviewing, amending or revising the guidelines.

36. All responsible members of the international community were faithfully committed to the peaceful uses of outer space. However, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea continued to flagrantly violate a number of relevant Security Council resolutions, which explicitly prohibited it from developing any ballistic missile technology and engaging in any related activities. Any attempts by that Government to justify its prohibited launch activities as exercising its right to peaceful use of outer space must be denounced as illegitimate and illegal, even if those activities involved a satellite or a space launch vehicle. 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.

37. **Ms. Pan** Kun (China) said that, as an increasing number of countries were engaging in outer space activities, COPUOS needed to play a more active role in strengthening the rule of law in outer space, promoting international cooperation and safeguarding its sustainable development. Her delegation therefore welcomed the recent achievements of COPUOS, including its adoption of seven priority themes for the fiftieth anniversary of UNISPACE. It supported the preparations that COPUOS was making for the commemorative activities and endorsed the proposal to use that occasion to improve the functions of COPUOS and develop long-term plans in response to new developments in outer space.

38. The latest major achievement by COPUOS had been the adoption of the first 12 draft articles of the guidelines for the long-term sustainability of outer space activities and the two-year extension of the mandate of the Working Group on the Long-term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities. That

achievement reflected the sense of responsibility and constructive spirit of all countries. China would continue to participate actively in the negotiations on the remainder of the draft guidelines, which should be conducted on the basis of the existing legal regime governing outer space. It was important to strike a proper balance between the free and equal use of outer space on the one hand and the healthy and orderly development of space activities on the other. In addition, the concerns of different countries must be taken into account.

39. The Government of China had formally designated 24 April as Space Day to commemorate the successful launching of its first man-made Earth satellite on that date in 1970. In 2016, China's Mars exploration mission had been officially approved, its national civil space infrastructure project and Chang'e-4 lunar exploration project had been launched and its Beidou Navigation System's global networking process had been accelerated. China had successfully conducted several launch missions, including those of a new generation of carrier rockets, the first satellite of the geostationary orbit satellite mobile communication system and QUESS, its first scientific experimental satellite.

40. The Government had continuously expanded international exchanges and cooperation in the field of outer space to promote benefit-sharing in human space activities. It had signed 108 bilateral cooperation agreements with 31 countries and international organizations and had established nearly 20 bilateral cooperation mechanisms. Nine bilateral space cooperation programs were being implemented and nine satellites had been developed and launched for other countries, including Brazil, Nigeria, Venezuela, Bolivia and Laos. Having invited international cooperation on Chang'e-4-related missions, China had thus far received payload requests from over ten countries and institutions and granted preliminary approval to those of Germany, Sweden and the Netherlands.

41. At the multilateral level, the Government strongly supported activities within the United Nations system for the peaceful uses of outer space, was actively facilitating the construction of the Space Information Corridor under the Belt and Road Initiative, promoted the construction of remote-sensing satellite constellations along with other BRIC countries' space agencies and supported the Asia-

Pacific Space Cooperation Organization (APSCO) in building joint, multi-tasking small satellite constellations. In accordance with the International Charter on Space and Major Disasters, it had provided satellite data support for major disaster relief to space agencies in numerous countries.

42. The Government firmly opposed the weaponization of outer space and the arms race. It strongly supported negotiations for an international treaty that would eliminate security threats and ensure exclusively peaceful uses of outer space. United Nations space agencies should take steps to strengthen coordination in order to strike a balance between the security and sustainable use of outer space and thus better manage the new risks and challenges it posed. Given that outer space was the common heritage of all mankind, China was ready to work with other countries to advance outer space activities in the interest of economic development and social progress.

43. **Mr. Pak Chol** (Democratic People's Republic of Korea) said that the development of outer space was progressing at an unprecedented pace and developing countries were increasingly involved in that endeavour. In the 18 years since its first satellite launch, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea had joined the elite global ranks of space exploration under the unified leadership of its Government. The successful launch of its ultra-modern Kwangmyongsong 4 earth observation satellite in February 2016 constituted a milestone in his country's technological and economic progress.

44. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea had signed and ratified several treaties and conventions on outer space and the Government had legally registered the Kwangmyongsong 4 satellite with the United Nations, all of which attested to the transparent and peaceful nature of its outer space activities. Nevertheless, the United States persisted in its attempts to block his country's completely lawful use of outer space, levelling the ridiculous charge that the satellite launch was in violation of Security Council resolutions prohibiting ballistic missile launches. The Security Council's resolutions imposing sanctions on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea bore no relation to the Council's objective of maintaining international peace and security. Instead, those resolutions — with their many legal contradictions —

amounted to little more than an unlawful fabrication for the benefit of the United States and an outgrowth of that country's hostile policy toward his own.

45. No international law currently in force stipulated that satellite launches using ballistic rocket launch technology posed a threat to international peace and security. It was preposterous for the United States, which had launched countless military surveillance and other kinds of satellites, to accuse the Democratic People's Republic of Korea of unlawful outer space activity, when his country was merely exercising its sovereign right under the Charter of the United Nations and the Outer Space Treaty by conducting its peaceful and lawful satellite launches. Moving forward, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea would continue its efforts to strengthen international cooperation on space science and would pursue its peaceful development of outer space, which was the common wealth of humankind. Under the National Aerospace Development Programme's five-year plan, the Government would continue to develop space science and technology, with a view to manufacturing and launching more cutting-edge application satellites.

46. **Mr. Abbani** (Algeria) said that the Government of Algeria had adopted a national space programme in 2006 and was working to develop the country's industrial capacities and meet national requirements in theoretical knowledge and practical applications. Activities under the programme had intensified in 2016 and included the successful launch of three satellites, which would strengthen national earth observation capacities and promote sustainable development by, inter alia, protecting the environment and various ecosystems, monitoring desertification and land use, and preventing and managing natural disasters. Projects to develop space applications included satellite imagery for natural resources, particularly for tracking forest fires, as well as for town planning. Training and research activities were also under way.

47. Algeria supported all initiatives to promote inter African cooperation in space applications and technologies for sustainable development on the continent, and had contributed to finalizing the African space policy adopted by the African Union in 2015. It was also participating in the efforts of the Office for Outer Space Affairs 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 context of the African Resources Management Satellite Constellation, with a view to contributing to the discovery and management of resources required for regional development and anti-poverty efforts. Algeria hosted the Regional Support Office for UN-SPIDER in support of natural disaster management for the region's countries.

48. 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 principles of peaceful use and non-appropriation of outer space, rather than on a "first-come, first-served" basis; tackling the dangers of space debris without hampering the emerging capacities of developing countries through voluntary implementation of the Inter-Agency Space Debris Coordination Committee (IADC) Space Debris Mitigation Guidelines; and introducing a regulatory framework for the commercialization of high-resolution satellite data to prevent misuse.

49. **Mr. Bosah** (Nigeria) said that harnessing the benefits of space technology was crucial to the global effort to eradicate poverty and implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In that context, his delegation emphasized the role of COPUOS in promoting transparency and confidence-building among States and ensuring that outer space was used for peaceful purposes. Firm cooperation and collaboration among States was fundamental to ensuring the responsible implementation of space activities and the use of space science and technology for the benefit of the human race.

50. Nigeria supported the activities of UN-SPIDER and was host country to the African Regional Centre for Space Science and Technology Education for English-speaking African Countries, which had provided postgraduate training to over 200 students from 19 countries. His delegation welcomed the completion by the Office for Outer Space Affairs of the curricula for the teaching of courses on global navigation satellite systems and space law at the regional centres for space science and technology. Lastly, his delegation commended the capacity-building activities of the United Nations Programme on Space Applications and welcomed the measures taken

by developed nations to enhance the capacity of developing nations in space technology. It encouraged the hosting of regional workshops, training courses and exchange programmes in those areas.

51. **Mr. Almahmoud** (United Arab Emirates) said that it was important to continue space exploration, develop its applications, promote scientific research and facilitate the peaceful use of outer space, given the increasingly vital role that outer space activities played in the efforts to achieve sustainable development, including in areas such as monitoring climate change, combating desertification and improving the management of natural resources. Space law should be strengthened to prevent an arms race in space, and States should conduct their space activities responsibly and transparently in accordance with international law, so as to build confidence and ensure security in outer space.

52. The United Arab Emirates had recently adopted a national policy designed to build a strong, sustainable space sector capable of supporting efforts to diversify the country's economy and develop scientific capacities and advanced technologies. In that connection, the Emirates Mars Mission — the first project of its kind in an Arab or Islamic country — would investigate a number of theretofore unanswered scientific questions on that planet. Through its National Space Agency, his country had prepared a strategic plan to advance the outer space sector and had forged a series of local and international partnerships with a view to strengthening national expertise and capacities in that sector. National investments in space technology had exceeded six billion dollars.

53. As an active member of COPUOS, his Government had engaged in discussions on the guidelines for the long-term sustainability of outer space activities and had participated in several international conferences and seminars. It had also hosted the Second International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)/United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs Aerospace Symposium and would host a high-level forum entitled "Space as a driver for socioeconomic sustainable development" in November 2016. Moreover, the United Arab Emirates had adopted several international treaties and conventions on international cooperation in the outer space sector.

54. **Mr. Takeda** (Japan) said that new challenges such as space debris and the emergence of new space

actors warranted rules to enhance the safety, security, stability and long-term sustainability of outer space activities. Japan therefore welcomed the adoption of the first set of COPUOS guidelines for the long-term sustainability of outer space. The next step was for States and international intergovernmental organizations to implement and comply with those guidelines voluntarily, as Japan intended to do. Japan would continue to contribute actively to the work of COPUOS and supported further discussion on the Committee's future role.

55. Japan had worked to strengthen regional cooperation through initiatives such as the Asia-Pacific Regional Space Agency Forum (APRSAF). At the twenty-second session of the forum, held in 2015, States had discussed how to share solutions through synergy in space in order to promote regional cooperation in disaster reduction and environmental monitoring from space. The session had also accelerated discussions on a new APRSAF initiative relating to synergies in the applications of geostationary and low Earth orbit satellites. The 2016 session of the forum would be held in close cooperation with Philippine research, science and other organizations. The Philippines would report on its first microsatellite, DIWATA-1, which had been jointly developed with Japanese universities and successfully deployed into orbit from the International Space Station Japanese Experiment Module "Kibo" in April 2016. Further discussions were expected on expanding the use and operation of microsatellites in the Asia-Pacific region and the tenth anniversary of Sentinel Asia would be commemorated. Interested parties were welcome to participate.

56. The Japanese Government had decided to extend its participation in International Space Station operations to 2024 through the Kibo Module, an H-II Transfer Vehicle referred to as KOUNOTORI, to be launched on 9 December 2016 as KOUNOTORI-6, and the provision of crew members. In collaboration with the Office for Outer Space Affairs, the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency had initiated a three year programme called KiboCUBE, which would grant educational or research institutions in developing Member States an opportunity to deploy their micro-satellites using the Module's unique capabilities. The University of Nairobi was the first institution selected and would deploy its microsatellite in 2017. It

was hoped that other developing countries would express interest. Japan looked forward to hosting the second meeting of the International Space Exploration Forum and to fruitful discussions on enhancing international cooperation on peaceful space exploration.

Statements made in exercise of the right of reply.

57. **Ms. Yoon** Seoungmee (Republic of Korea) said that North Korea had recently announced that it was ready to mount nuclear warheads to its rockets and her delegation maintained that the purported satellite launches disguised the testing of intercontinental ballistic missiles. It was clear that the true intentions of North Korea were not the peaceful use of outer space; instead, it sought to develop long-range ballistic missile capability. In the light of Security Council resolutions prohibiting any launches by North Korea using ballistic missile technology, she recalled that, under the Charter of the United Nations, Member States must accept and carry out the decisions of the Security Council and that, in accordance with Article 103 of the Charter, their obligations under the Charter prevailed over their obligations under any other international agreement. The Secretary-General had clarified to the Security Council that the ratification of the Convention on Registration of Objects Launched into Outer Space by North Korea was merely a technical procedure that did not confer legality or legitimacy to its launch.

58. **Mr. Pak** Chol (Democratic People's Republic of Korea) said that South Korea had always insisted that the satellite launch by his country was a rocket launch and that its peaceful space activities violated Security Council resolutions prohibiting all launches employing ballistic missile technology. His delegation categorically rejected the politicized remarks made by the representative of South Korea. Outer space was the common domain of all peoples, and Security Council resolutions had no bearing whatsoever on the current debate on the peaceful uses of outer space. All States had the legitimate right to use outer space for peaceful purposes, in line with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations; such use was also in the interest of humankind's prosperity and civilization. Calling his country's legitimate satellite launches into account was a reckless infringement on and challenge to its sovereignty. The Security Council resolutions in question were the product of anachronistic policies

against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. No existing international laws stipulated that satellite launches employing ballistic missile technology constituted a threat to international peace and security. He asked the representative of South Korea to enlighten him as to whether her own country had some special technology that allowed satellites to be launched without using ballistic missiles. The behaviour of South Korea amounted to hostility against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, and his delegation reiterated that satellite launches for peaceful purposes were the dignified right of a sovereign State.

59. **Ms. Yoon** Seoungmee (Republic of Korea) said that North Korea clearly had no intention of complying with the relevant Security Council resolutions and its obligations under the Charter of the United Nations. Under the Charter, all Member States were required to accept and carry out the decisions of the Security Council. If North Korea continued to violate its obligations under the Charter, the international community should question whether that country should retain its membership in the United Nations. She urged all Member States to avoid all forms of technical cooperation with North Korea in connection with launches using ballistic missile technology.

60. **Mr. Pak** Chol (Democratic People's Republic of Korea) said that his country's satellite launch for peaceful purposes was in line with the dignified, independent rights of a sovereign State as recognized by international law. South Korea, the United States and other countries insisted on the importance of the peaceful uses of outer space but were nonetheless engaged in the militarization of outer space. South Korea would do well to reflect on its own errors and should recognize the dignified, independent rights of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. In addition, it should take national pride in his country's advanced space capabilities instead of criticizing its legitimate space development activities unnecessarily. His country would continue to contribute to international efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals by rigorously accelerating space development under its national five-year plan, in accordance with relevant international laws and regardless of the opinion of others.

The meeting rose at noon.