

High-Level Segment UNISPACE+50

Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space

Vienna, 20 June 2018



Statement by Mrs. Zuhai DEMIR

Secretary of State for Science Policy

Kingdom of Belgium

Head of Delegation

Madam Chair,
Mister Director-General,
Madam Director of the Office for Outer Space Affairs,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me first congratulate you, Madam Chair, on your election as chair of this very important session of UNCOPUOS.

Belgium fully supports the statement made by the European Union, and would like to add the following considerations in its national capacity.

Belgium is very pleased to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the first World Conference on the Exploration and the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. This anniversary comes in a timely manner, as it provides an opportunity to take stock of the implementation of the recommendations adopted at the

third UNISPACE Conference in Vienna in 1999, and to figure out how the space domain should evolve in the next decade.

As we all know, outer space and its resources, through technology and science, play an increasing role in our daily lives. Technology provides us with new services on a global scale, bringing the citizens of the world a little closer each day. Science allows us to discover our planet in its environment, its vulnerability, but also its incredible beauty. Beyond our planet, space is limitless and nourishes our dreams of new horizons.

Whichever corner of the globe we are living in, we share at least three things: the Sun, the Moon and the sky. Outer space is our common wealth.

UNISPACE + 50 is also an opportunity to inspire vocations amongst young people and students. I particularly have in mind incentives and supportive actions for women in order to encourage them to access technological, scientific, political, economic or legal careers related to space. My government is aware, Madam Director, that you are very active in this area. The United Nations expert meeting on Space for Women has set up important and challenging objectives. I can assure you that Belgium stands ready to help you in achieving these objectives.

As one of the founding members of the United Nations Committee for the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, Belgium committed itself at an early stage to the exploration and the use of outer space. In any event, Belgium is eager to work towards an effective sharing of the benefits from outer space by all nations and all citizens, in their richness and diversity.

Since the very beginnings of Space Europe in 1960, Belgian industry and research, supported by the Government, have attached great importance to space. In areas as diverse as satellite telecommunication, Earth observation with notably the PROBA-1 and PROBA-V satellites, navigation solutions, European launcher technology, microgravity, astrophysics and even manned spaceflight involving the participation of two astronauts of

Belgian nationality on three occasions, the space sector has elevated Belgium to the rank of a significant space faring nation.

Belgium has also developed a legal framework dedicated to space activities. This legal framework is regularly updated with respect to the actual evolution of space technologies and practices.

Therefore, my country is very pleased to find the Committee so active in the elaboration of a Space Agenda for 2030; an agenda that will ensure the necessary correspondence between the international governance of space activities and current or future needs of States and their citizens. It will also achieve the essential balance between an equitable progress, the preservation of natural resources and the protection of the environment, be it on the ground or in orbit. That agenda will be driven by the concern of a sustainable and responsible development.

Belgium therefore supports the draft Resolution proposed by the Committee, and wishes all UNISPACE+50 participants and the Member States full success in responding to the stakes and to the hopes of present and future generations.

Thank you for your attention.