

**Strengthening the governance of and promoting cooperation and win-win in outer space,
in a joint effort to build a shared future in space exploration and use**

Statement by head of the Chinese delegation, H. E. Ambassador Shi Zhongjun

at the UNISPACE+50 high-level segment

20 June 2018, Vienna, Austria

Madam Chair,

First of all, I congratulate you on your election as chairperson of the 61st COPUOS session and wish the UNISPACE+50 high-level segment full success.

Half a century ago, at the beginning of human's journey to explore space, the international community already realized that space governance and cooperation were the two wings of humanity's dream of space exploration. UNISPACE I set in motion the process toward space governance and cooperation, yielding extraordinary results over the past 5 decades.

First, the outer space governance regime has been well developed. COPUOS and its Scientific and Technical Sub-committee (STSC) and Legal Sub-committee (LSC) have played a central role in the global governance of outer space, and with a growing membership from 24 to 87 today, established dialogue and cooperation in wide ranging areas such as space policy, laws and technology, and developed close ties with stakeholders such as international organizations, civil society and the space industry, among others, thus become an authoritative platform for timely response to peaceful use related calls and challenges.

Second, rules governing outer space activities have continuously improved. Based on the cornerstone Outer Space Treaty, COPUOS has developed a number of treaties which constitute an effective legal regime governing outer space. COPUOS has also, through developing soft laws on issues such as space debris and NPS in outer space, complemented the outer space treaties where needed, grappled with such frontier issues as the long-term sustainability of outer space activities and the commercial exploitation of outer space, thus helped shape a rules-based outer space order.

In addition, cooperation in various aspects of space activities has been profoundly enhanced. Such flagship projects as the UN-affiliated regional centres for space science and technology education, UN-SPIDER, and others have yielded tangible results. Bilateral and multilateral cooperation in various fields has driven the wide dissemination of space science and technology, helped increase appreciably countries' interest and capabilities in the use of outer space, and shown the huge potential of space activities to benefit human life. Outer space technology has become an important driver of sustainable development.

Madam Chair,

With science and technology advancing rapidly and human space activities entering a new era, various complex issues have kept cropping up: growing space security risk, uneven development in space capabilities, and continued emergence of new participants in and forms of outer space activities. UNISPACE+50 represents a historic opportunity to chart future governance and meet challenges. The outcome document just adopted after 3 years of preparations and full discussion reflects the consensus of the international community on the future direction of outer space governance. My delegation thanks India, Germany and Canada for their role in chairing the relevant discussions and looks forward to the 73rd UNGA endorsing the document. Now I'd like to state further China's following three propositions:

First we should foster a sense of shared future to promote the sustainable development of outer space. The UNISPACE+50 outcome document points out the need to realize a shared vision for the future in the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful

purposes and for the benefit and in the interest of all humankind. This agreement is a core concept of the outcome document and also an important contribution of UNISPACE+50 to the development of future outer space governance policy.

A shared vision for the future in space exploration and use is not only consistent with the objectives and purposes established in the Outer Space Treaty that the exploration and use of outer space should be for the benefit and in the interest of all countries but also in line with current needs to protect the outer space environment and promote sustainability both for outer space activities and socioeconomic development; it reflects the common aspiration of the international community and points the clear direction for strengthening the global governance of and international cooperation in outer space in the new era as well as addressing various challenges in the peaceful uses of outer space.

China has always strived to uphold that vision in strengthening international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space. Yesterday, the side event themed *China's Space Cooperation: Towards a Shared Future and Benefit for All* showcased the practical initiatives taken by China to promote, through open cooperation, the realization of a shared vision for future space exploration and use. China stands ready to work tirelessly with other countries to this end.

Second, we should follow the principle of wide consultation, joint construction and shared benefits in taking the global space governance to a new level. Currently, space congestion highlights the difficulties of governance, the emergence of a commercial space industry calls for regulatory reform, and large numbers of developing countries have yet to benefit fully from space technology. Meeting these challenges requires the pooling of wisdom and efforts from various stakeholders. The governance framework built on the UN treaties, principles and resolutions on outer space with COPUOS as its main platform has, by and large, worked and should continue to be maintained and strengthened in the future. At the same time, the specific mechanisms and rules of the framework should be continuously improved on the basis of equal participation of and discussion among states so as to grasp and respond to in a keen and timely manner the various needs and challenges of current activities in the peaceful uses of outer space. These include planning and optimizing the working mechanism as well as enhancing the efficiency and role of COPUOS through developing a space2030 agenda and its implementation plan; allowing OOSA to play its role fully and effectively by making full use of available resources; promoting the universalization and more equal, full and effective application of the relevant outer space treaties; and

responding to emerging issues timely and effectively using the COPUOS platform by complementing and developing the rules governing outer space, as appropriate.

As a party to the main treaties on outer space, China has supported and participated in the consultations on the relevant UN principles and guidelines, including consultations on the *guidelines for the long-term sustainability of outer space activities* as well as discussions on emerging issues such as the exploration and exploitation of outer space resources and management of small satellites, among others. At home, China has faithfully fulfilled its treaty obligations by improving relevant legislation and implementing it in space activity planning and regulation. China will continue, via COPUOS, its in-depth engagement with the international community in efforts to improve the global governance of outer space.

Third, we should adhere to the principle of cooperation and mutual benefit in deepening cooperation in the various areas of outer space. Cooperation is the eternal theme of the peaceful use of outer space and key to improving space capacity, meeting common challenges and achieving sustainable development driven by space technology. The UNISPACE+50 outcome document reconfirms the importance of and points out the specific direction for international cooperation, including taking into account the special needs of the developing countries. Consensus on these issues should be implemented fully and effectively. China welcomes COPUOS and UNOOSA to continue playing their coordinating and promotional role in this regard.

China has been promoting cooperation with various parties under the principle of openness, inclusiveness and mutual benefit, paying particular attention to supporting the applications requirements of and capacity building in developing countries. Addressing the 18th Meeting of the Council of Heads of Member States of The Shanghai Cooperation Organization on 10 June, President Xi Jinping announced that China is ready to offer meteorological services using the FY-II meteorological satellite. On 28th May, China and the UN put out an announcement on first-round cooperation opportunities for experiments onboard the China Space Station (CSS), inviting other countries to do experiments onboard the CSS using their own experimental payloads or those provided by China and do extra-vehicular experiments using their own EV payloads. Astronauts or payload specialists will be given opportunities for orbital flight in the future. China provided 18 million RMB for the UN-SPIDER Beijing office in support of disaster prevention and management in regional countries. The UN-affiliated Regional Center for Space Science and Technology Education in Asia and the Pacific (China), located in Beihang University, has trained nearly 800 space science and law specialists from regional countries. The Chinese government has always

supported and will continue to support the work of the Asia Pacific Space Cooperation Organization and expand exchanges and cooperation among countries in the Asia Pacific region in the peaceful use of outer space.

The *Belt and Road* initiative has also brought strong impetus to space cooperation. With multiple countries and regions along the *Belt and Road*, China has established mechanisms of cooperation in the satellite navigation area and will jointly build a *Belt and Road* space information corridor to promote information connectivity in the regions concerned.

Madam Chair,

The cause of space exploration and use is going strong. China stands ready to work with other countries to implement the outcome of UNISPACE+50 and contribute to realizing the shared vision for the future in the peaceful uses of outer space for the benefit of all humankind.

Thank you, Madam chair.