

2018

GENERAL ASSEMBLY- UNITED
NATIONS COMMITTEE ON PEACEFUL
USES OF OUTERSPACE (UNCOPUOS)

UNISPACE + 50 HIGH LEVEL SEGMENT

DEPUTY MINISTER B. MAGWANISHE, DEPARTMENT OF TRADE
AND INDUSTRY

OUTERSPACE AFFAIRS | VIENNA, AUSTRIA, 20-21 JUNE 2018

Madam Chairperson

We would like to congratulate you on your election as the Chairperson of the 61st session of the UNCOPUOS.

We would also like to congratulate other member of the bureau on their election.

South Africa is grateful to the Secretariat for the excellent preparation for this auspicious event and commends the leadership of Ms Simonetta Di Pippo.

My delegation aligns itself with the Statement delivered by Iraq on behalf of the Group of 77+ China.

Chairperson, South Africa is privileged to commemorate the UNISPACE+ 50, alongside all other delegations.

As a country, we are honoured to have served, as participants in these deliberations; which have contributed to global space governance, since joining the Committee in 1994.

UNISPACE + 50, is a platform that has enabled the commitment to the 5 UN Treaties.

This has further provided an opportunity, to undertake examinations, of how global space governance, can be merged with technological and commercial interests.

We therefore heed to the call, in support of the Space 2030 Agenda.

Its contribution, to space derived socio-economic benefits; and space policy, cannot be undermined.

South Africa, has key interest in *Global partnerships concerning Space exploration and innovation; and will continue, to prioritize this area for economic development.*

Furthermore, we will actively respond, to a number of these thematic areas; based on the four pillars, governing the development of Space activities.

In the previous year, South Africa participated and hosted a number of High Level events.

One of which was, the United Nations Basic Space Science and Technology Initiative (UNBSTI) in December 2017.

This was aimed at building capacity, around satellite technology and manufacturing capabilities.

Aligned to the above, was also the development of a legislative and regulatory framework.

As a result, global and continental experts convened, for fruitful discussions.

As a respected member of the UNCOPUOS, South Africa's space policy, espouses the importance, of International co-operation; in the promotion of access to the science, technology and socio-economic welfare.

Chairperson,

It is articulated in Africa's Agenda 2063, that the continent, holds the highest demand for Space products and services; due to the increased dependency on Space, for economic value.

These Space related products include; Earth observation, communication, financial transactions and navigation systems.

Space based technologies, for disaster management are incorporated.

The aforementioned products, have exponentially reduced social challenges; that continue to plague our continent and other developing countries.

It is for this reason, that South Africa, has played a key role, in the development and adoption; of the African Space Policy and Strategy, of 2016.

The adoption by the Heads of States in the African Union; provides a needed framework, for collective collaboration, on African Space activities.

This has set the parameters, for Space Governance in the continent; and strategic engagements leading to the Africa Agenda 2063.

Furthermore, we welcome the increased participation and membership of more African Member States, in UNCOPUOS.

This will ensure, that African aspirations and concerns, are represented in Outer Space governance.

South Africa affirms the view that, UN-COPUOS; is the appropriate multilateral body, to address the interests and concerns of all states; pertaining to the peaceful use of Outer Space.

In the spirit of upholding Space for peaceful purposes; the South African government has ratified 4 of the UN Treaties.

We are committed to ensure, the long- term sustainability (LTS) of outer- space activities; particularly in the development of guidelines, to address the challenges posed by Space debris (Junk).

Here rest the interests of all mankind; as concerned for current and future generations.

Chairperson,

The UNISPACE+50 Event is convened at a critical time; when the international community has commenced; with the implementation of the 2030 Agenda; for achievement of Sustainable Development Goals.

This, is therefore consistent with the impetus, in support of Africa's socio-economic development, through the use of Space applications.

Regional integration, coupled with the promotion of research and development, are highly esteemed principles, of our National Space Policy.

Therefore, we recognize the importance of continuous capacity-building; through training, education and skills development, in space science and technology.

These capacity building programs, are actively pursued alongside other initiatives, like the Pan

African University for Space Institute; to be hosted by South Africa, from 2019.

An addition to this, is the Committee of African Space Institutions (CASI); which will be formally established, on the Margins of this Event.

Continental and regional partnerships have additionally aided, in the mobilisation and better deployment of resources.

This includes making sure that investments are directed at Space technologies, relevant to the growth of the African market.

In conclusion, South Africa is committed to fostering, peaceful use of outer-space environment, as governed by the current Space Affairs Act (No. 84 of 1993).

This will be premised, on focused sector activities; aligned to the relevant international practices and treaties.

The current Act is being reviewed; and will be replaced by a new Space Legislation, within the next 2 years.

The current national and international dispensation, will better reflect the transformation agenda, required in the Space environment.

Therefore, we will continue to spearhead regional and international co-operation, particularly in the areas of capacity building.

In this regard, South Africa has occupied an exhibition space at the Rotunda; to exhibit some of its programmes; and capabilities; alongside other Member states.

Chairperson, we hereby confirm our endorsement of the Draft Resolution, for the development of the 2030 Space Agenda.

I thank you.