

Canadian Statement
Agenda Item 4 – General Exchange of Views
Statement delivered by: Head of Delegation

Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space
Scientific and Technical Subcommittee
Fifty-seventh Session, Vienna, Feb 3-14, 2020

Madame la Présidente,

C'est avec grand plaisir que la délégation canadienne vous souhaite la bienvenue à titre de nouvelle présidente du sous-comité scientifique et technique. Nous avons hâte de travailler sous votre direction compétente pour progresser sur les éléments importants de cette session, notamment les travaux de suivi des 21 directives sur viabilité à long terme des activités spatiales ainsi que le programme « Espace 2030 » et de son plan de mise en œuvre.

Ma délégation aimerait également exprimé sa gratitude à la directrice du bureau des affaires extra-atmosphériques des Nations Unies, Madame Simonetta Di Pippo ainsi qu'à son équipe entière pour leurs continuels efforts à supporter les états membres dans leur travail.

Madame la présidente, distingués délégués,

2019 fut une autre année majeure pour le Canada dans l'espace, particulièrement dans les domaines des vols habités, de l'utilisation de l'espace et de l'exploration spatiale.

On December 3, 2018, astronaut David Saint-Jacques launched on Canada's third longest duration crew mission to the ISS alongside NASA astronaut Anne McClain and Roscosmos cosmonaut Oleg Kononenko. His six-month stay on the ISS included record-setting productivity in science. During his assignment on the ISS, Dr. Saint-Jacques performed critical robotics and operations tasks, including a spacewalk; conducted a series of Canadian and international science experiments; acted as crew medical officer; and shared his experience through numerous education and outreach events. In April 2019, David became the 4th Canadian to walk in space, and the first to do so in 12 years. He returned to Earth with his Soyuz crew in June 2019. This was his first mission, the 17th Canadian spaceflight, and the longest by a Canadian at 204 days.

David's mission provided the perfect opportunity for Canadians to get engaged in space, raise awareness of the benefits of space science and technology in our everyday lives, and showcase space diplomacy.

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Other 2019 highlights for Canada include the launch of its RADARSAT Constellation Mission (RCM) in June 2019. RCM is a world-leading Synthetic Aperture Radar mission, comprised of three identical satellites, which are used for maritime surveillance, disaster management and ecosystem monitoring. RCM represents an evolution of the RADARSAT Program and ensures C-Band SAR data continuity for the Government of Canada. RCM data uptake is expected to reach 50 times that of RADARSAT-1 while providing new applications enabled by the constellation approach. It will increase revisit, and introduce a more robust, flexible system. Canada takes pride in the research and development of technologies that will contribute to space utilization for sustainable economic development.

Madame Chair, distinguished delegates,

Countries from around the world are getting ready to send humans further into our solar system, beyond the International Space Station (ISS) and Low Earth Orbit. Nearly 400,000 km away from our planet, the Moon represents a crucial stepping stone in humanity's quest to travel onwards to Mars. Moving beyond the ISS, the ISS partnership is discussing a space platform in a lunar orbit – called the Lunar Gateway – that will extend human presence and further demonstrate and prove technologies and operations at a larger distance from Earth. On February 28, 2019 the Government of Canada announced its commitment to join the US-led Lunar Gateway program and to develop an autonomous, artificial intelligence enabled robotics system for the Lunar Gateway.

Coupled with Gateway, the Government of Canada announced a new Lunar Exploration Accelerator Program (LEAP). LEAP will support space technology development and in-space demonstrations, as well as science missions. Its aim is to expand and prepare Canada's space sector for future exploration missions by offering technology development, science and mission opportunities in lunar orbit, on the Moon's surface, or further into deep space.

Finally, Canada's national space strategy was published in 2019. Entitled *Exploration, Imagination, Innovation: A New Space Strategy for Canada*, it recognizes the strategic value of space and space exploration for Canada and highlights a plan for future space exploration, space science and employment.

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In addition to Canada’s commitment in the Lunar Gateway, the Strategy includes, *inter alia*, the modernization of Canada’s space regulatory framework; inspiring the next generation of Canadians to reach for the stars; harnessing space to solve everyday challenges for Canadians; positioning Canada’s space sector to help grow the economy and create the jobs for the future and ensuring Canada’s leadership in acquiring and using space-based data to support science excellence, innovation and economic growth.

We have provided further details on David’s mission, our RADARSAT Constellation Mission, lunar initiatives, and other specific Canadian space activities for 2019, in our annual report to the Subcommittee. We strongly encourage other member states to also contribute to this valuable information-sharing mechanism.

Madame Chair, distinguished delegates,

2019 was also a banner year for the Committee and its subcommittees with the consensus achieved on 21 guidelines and a preamble for the long-term sustainability of outer space activities and subsequent support by the UN General Assembly.

Canada encourages the Committee, its Subcommittees and the Office to capitalize on this momentum, through the working group on the Space 2030 agenda, in order to establish a forward-looking vision for COPUOS, reflecting the unique mandate and position of COPUOS at the centre of international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space and global governance of outer space activities and shaped by our commitment to inspire young people and to promote diversity and the engagement of women in the space sector. In implementing the “Space2030” Agenda, Canada remains dedicated to global partnerships and strengthened cooperation among Member States, United Nations entities, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, industry and private sector entities, with the Committee, supported by UNOOSA.

Under the leadership of its Chair Peter Martinez from South Africa, this committee was able to achieve consensus on this crucial work to establish and promote non-binding, practicable norms. This effort has proven to be an excellent and needed exercise in space diplomacy, which has

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already contributed to building transparency and confidence among member states. Canada encourages all member states to press ahead with the national implementation of the guidelines, and we look forward to sharing implementation best practices in the future working group on the Long-term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities. In order to achieve the two main goals of the LTS 2.0 Working Group, identifying practices and procedures towards practical implementation as well as proposing recommendations to strengthening international cooperation in the implementation of the 21 consensus guidelines, we should set clear milestones for the next five years. Their implementation will encourage the safe and responsible use of outer space and further legitimize the work of the Committee while increasing Member States' active engagement with this unique body.

Finally, Madame Chair, distinguished delegates,

Given the demands and challenges of space, international cooperation and dialogue on space activities is essential. Since 1959, COPUOS championed cooperation and dialogue in the exploration and peaceful uses of outer space and I would like to reiterate the full commitment and support of the Canadian delegation for the work of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, and the Office as the Secretariat. As we tackle global challenges to people, Earth and space, it is important that we promote space as a driver for sustainable development to achieve our global, regional and national goals. We look forward to a dynamic and constructive session.

Merci pour votre attention