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**Committee on the Peaceful  
Uses of Outer Space**  
Fifty-fourth session  
Vienna, 1-10 June 2011

## **Declaration on the Fiftieth Anniversary of Human Space Flight and the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space**

**Working paper submitted by the Chair of the Committee on the  
Peaceful Uses of Outer Space**

### **I. Background**

1. At the forty-eighth session of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, the Working Group of the Whole considered the preparations for the commemorations to be held during the fifty-fourth session of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.
2. The Working Group of the Whole noted the decision taken by the Committee at its fifty-third session, in 2010, that the events on 1 June 2011 would include a high-level segment, open to all States Members of the United Nations. Those events would enjoy the participation of representatives at the ministerial level, heads of agencies, astronauts and other dignitaries and would address the achievements of the Committee over the course of 50 years, the 50 years of human space flight and the future of humanity in outer space.
3. The Working Group of the Whole agreed that a draft document should be prepared with the objective of having a declaration of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space adopted at the high-level segment and that the draft document should be further negotiated among States members of the Committee and finalized before the fifty-fourth session of the Committee. The Working Group noted in that regard that consultations had been held during the forty-eighth session of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee under the leadership of the Chair of the Committee, on the basis of a non-paper prepared by the Secretariat and circulated among permanent missions in Vienna, and agreed that the Chair of the Committee, in close consultation with the Secretariat, should prepare a working

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paper of the Chair, to be issued in the six official languages of the United Nations, for further consideration by the Legal Subcommittee at its fiftieth session.

4. At its fiftieth session, the Legal Subcommittee noted that informal consultations had been held during the session, under the leadership of the Chair of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, on the preparations for the commemorative segment of the fifty-fourth session of the Committee and on the preparation of a declaration to be adopted on 1 June 2011, as contained in a working paper submitted by the Chair of the Committee entitled "Declaration on the Fiftieth Anniversary of Human Space Flight and the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space" (A/AC.105/L.283).

5. The Subcommittee agreed on the text of the draft declaration contained in document A/AC.105/L.283, as amended, and noted that the revised draft declaration would be submitted to the Committee at its fifty-fourth session, during the commemorative segment, on 1 June 2011.

6. The revised draft declaration, to be adopted during the commemorative segment of the fifty-fourth session of the Committee on 1 June 2011, is contained in section II below.

## **II. Draft Declaration on the Fiftieth Anniversary of Human Space Flight and the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space**

We, the States participating in the commemorative segment of the fifty-fourth session of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, held at Vienna on 1 June 2011, in commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of human space flight and the fiftieth anniversary of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space,

1. *Recall* the launch into outer space of the first human-made Earth satellite, Sputnik I, on 4 October 1957, thus opening the way for space exploration;

2. *Also recall* that on 12 April 1961, Yuri Gagarin became the first human to orbit the Earth, opening a new chapter of human endeavour in outer space;

3. *Further recall* the amazing history of human presence in outer space and the remarkable achievements since the first human spaceflight, in particular Valentina Tereshkova becoming the first woman to orbit the Earth on 16 June 1963, Neil Armstrong becoming the first human to set foot upon the surface of the Moon on 20 July 1969, and the docking of the Apollo and Soyuz spacecrafts on 17 July 1975, being the first international human mission in space, and recall that for the past decade humanity has maintained a multinational permanent human presence in outer space aboard the International Space Station;

4. *Respectfully recall* that the human exploration of outer space has not been without sacrifice, and remember the men and women who have lost their lives in the pursuit of expanding humanity's frontiers;

5. *Emphasize* the significant progress in the development of space science and technology and their applications that has enabled humans to explore the universe, and the extraordinary achievements made over the past fifty years in space exploration efforts, including deepening the understanding of the planetary system and the Sun and the Earth itself, in the use of space science and technology for the benefit of all humankind and in the development of the international legal regime governing space activities;

6. *Recall* the entry into force of the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies (Outer Space Treaty) on 10 October 1967,<sup>1</sup> which establishes the fundamental principles of international space law;

7. *Also recall* the first meeting of the permanent Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, convened on 27 November 1961, which facilitated the adoption of General Assembly resolutions 1721 A to E (XVI) of 20 December 1961, including resolution 1721 A, in which the first legal principles were commended to States for their guidance in space activities, and resolution 1721 B, in which the Assembly expressed its belief that the United Nations should provide a focal point for international cooperation in the peaceful exploration and use of outer space;

8. *Recognize* that the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, assisted by the Office for Outer Space Affairs of the Secretariat, has for the past fifty years served as a unique platform at the global level for international cooperation in space activities and that the Committee and its subsidiary bodies stand at the forefront in bringing the world together in using space science and technology to preserve the Earth and the space environment and ensure the future of human civilization;

9. *Acknowledge* that significant changes have occurred in the structure and content of the space endeavour, as reflected in the emergence of new technologies and the increasing number of actors at all levels, and therefore note with satisfaction the progress made in strengthening international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space by enhancing the capacity of States for economic, social and cultural development and by strengthening the regulatory frameworks and mechanisms to that effect;

10. *Reaffirm* the importance of international cooperation in developing the rule of law, including the relevant norms of space law, and of the widest possible adherence to the international treaties that promote the peaceful uses of outer space;

11. *Express our firm conviction* that space science and technology and their applications, such as satellite communications, Earth observation systems and satellite navigation technologies, provide indispensable tools for viable long-term solutions for sustainable development and can contribute more effectively to efforts to promote the development of all countries and regions of the world, to improve people's lives, to conserve natural resources in a

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<sup>1</sup> United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 610, No. 8843.

world with a growing population that places an increasing strain on all ecosystems, and to enhance the preparedness for and mitigation of the consequences of disasters;

12. *Express our deep concern* about the fragility of the space environment and the challenges to the long-term sustainability of outer space activities, in particular the impact of space debris;

13. *Stress* the need to look more closely into how advanced space research and exploration systems and technologies could further contribute to meeting challenges, including that of global climate change, and to food security and global health, and endeavour to examine how the outcomes and spin-offs of scientific research in human space flight could increase the benefits, in particular for developing countries;

14. *Emphasize* that regional and interregional cooperation in the field of space activities is essential to strengthen the peaceful uses of outer space, assist States in the development of their space capabilities and contribute to the achievement of the goals of the United Nations Millennium Declaration;<sup>2</sup>

15. *Confirm* the need for closer coordination between the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and other intergovernmental bodies involved in the global development agenda of the United Nations, including with respect to the major United Nations conferences and summits for economic, social and cultural development;

16. *Call upon* all States to take measures at the national, regional, interregional and global levels to engage in the common efforts to use space science and technology and their applications to preserve planet Earth and its space environment for future generations.

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<sup>2</sup> General Assembly resolution 55/2.