

STATEMENT OF THE FEDERATIVE REPUBLIC OF BRAZIL ON THE OCCASION OF THE
HIGH-LEVEL SEGMENT OF UNISPACE+50, DELIVERED BY H.E. AMBASSADOR RICARDO
NEIVA TAVARES, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF BRAZIL

Your Excellencies,

Madam Chair,

Distinguished Delegates,

It is a pleasure and a privilege to have the opportunity to address this meeting on this momentous occasion, in which we celebrate the 50th anniversary of the first United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. Allow me to begin by congratulating Ms. Rosa Maria Arellano from Mexico on her election as Chairperson of the 61st session of the Committee on the Peaceful uses of Outer Space and UNISPACE+50. I would also like to express my appreciation to the Director of the United Nations Office of Outer Space Affairs, Ms. Simonetta Di Pippo, and her staff for their hard work in preparing this session.

UNISPACE+50 is a milestone in many ways. We are here to commemorate the anniversary of the first UNISPACE and the achievements of this Committee since that first conference. But as we reflect on the past achievements of this Committee, we have a unique opportunity to discuss current challenges and look into the future. In doing so, we must find ways to ensure that space remains a peaceful environment where all nations, regardless of their degree of development, can cooperate to explore and use space in a sustainable manner to deliver benefits to the whole of humankind.

This is what our predecessors had in mind almost 60 years ago, in 1959, when they negotiated resolution 1472. Back then, at the dawn of the space age, they had a vision. Their vision was that space should be used cooperatively and in peace to further the progress of humankind. This is the guiding vision that informs the work of COPUOS. This is the vision to which Brazil, as a founding member of the Committee, remains fully committed.

Madam Chair,

It is fortunate that we are staging this conference at a time of renewed interest in space activities, in which we see a growing number of actors advancing bold proposals and ideas that just a few years ago would have been dismissed as science fiction. Outer space is no longer the sole province of states. We are entering a new space age, one whose opportunities are only matched by comparable technical and legal challenges. More than ever, States need to work together to ensure that the benefits of outer space activities can be shared by all nations.

Brazil was among the first countries to recognize the fundamental role played by space science in the promotion of sustainable development and progress. Just as important, we realized early on that international cooperation was an essential element in developing a consistent space program that could deliver benefits to our population. Accordingly, Brazil set out to establish partnerships across the globe that could deliver positive results to all parties involved. Back in the 1980s, we broke new ground when we announced that Brazil and China, two developing countries, would work together to develop CBERS, which eventually became a family of highly successful remote

sensing satellites. We then went on to develop open-source remote sensing software and promote policies of free access to satellite data to ensure satellite technologies could benefit those countries that needed them most. More recently, Brazil became an early advocate and supporter of the Open Universe initiative, proposed by Italy, which will also allow us to use astronomical data to deliver benefits to humankind. In short, Brazil sees international cooperation as a way to generate mutual benefits to all parties involved and realize the aims of the Outer Space Treaty.

However, cooperation can only deliver benefits if we can rely on a strengthened COPUOS that can continue to play its unique role. COPUOS holds a unique position as it is the only multilateral forum where all matters related to the use of space can be addressed in a plural manner with due concern to the interests of all nations, developed and developing alike. For almost 60 years, COPUOS has been able to deliver long-lasting solutions by fostering cooperation and promoting the peaceful uses of outer space. Most importantly, COPUOS allows states to acknowledge their shared interest in space activities and has thus helped to preserve space as a peaceful environment. COPUOS has lived up to the vision of our predecessors who expressed, in resolution 1472, their 'desire to avoid the extension of national rivalries into space'.

But the preservation of space as a peaceful arena whose sustainability is essential to life on Earth is not to be taken for granted. Concerns remain over the risk of conflict in outer space. COPUOS itself is sometimes challenged by some who fail to see the power of our consensual views. But the truth is that there is no replacement to COPUOS and the UN system. Geopolitical and strategic tensions combined with an increasing reliance of ground systems on space-generated information mean that we need to

work actively and together to allay fears and suspicions and promote responsible behavior in outer space. And this can only take place within the UN system.

This, in fact, echoes the core message of SG António Guterres in a document published just last May. In 'Securing a Common Future – an Agenda for Disarmament', the Secretary-General expressed his commitment to have UNOOSA, the Office for Disarmament Affairs and the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research deepen their engagement with Member States on the practical implementation of transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space activities and on the elaboration of effective measures for the prevention of an arms race in outer space. I quote his words: 'the United Nations remains uniquely placed to facilitate international cooperation and mutual restraint as the only sustainable solution to ensuring peace and security in outer space'.

This is a position that is perfectly aligned with the views of Brazil. COPUOS is not a disarmament forum, but by engaging countries in an exchange of views and by promoting awareness of the potentials and the risks that affect space activities, it makes an invaluable contribution to the preservation of peace in space. By advancing the global governance of space activities, COPUOS promotes transparency and trust. By building consensus, it reminds us that space is the province of humankind and that it is to be used collectively and cooperatively.

Madam Chair,

The challenges of cooperation and governance need a Committee that can deliver not only now but in the decades to come. The draft “Resolution on the 50th Anniversary of the First UNISPACE: space as a driver of sustainable development”, which was endorsed by the High Level Segment this morning, provides us with the building blocks that are needed to ensure that COPUOS can evolve to continue to deliver in areas such as capacity-building, education, training, access to space and the development of the international legal regime applicable to space activities.

In this regard, the negotiation and implementation of the Space 2030 Agenda that will stem from UNISPACE+50 are of particular importance. Life on Earth is increasingly reliant on space data and space technologies. The Space 2030 Agenda, together with the seven thematic priorities of UNISPACE+50, will help chart the activities of the Committee in the years to come and help to deliver the benefits of space science to more countries and more users. Space is vast, its uses are limitless, but we can only enjoy its benefits if we choose to cooperate rather than compete. This is the choice that Brazil has made, and we look forward to the further achievements of COPUOS in the decades to come, until our countries meet again for the next UNISPACE.

Thank you, Madam Chair.