

Statement of Sweden

UNISPACE + 50 - High Level Segment of the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space Vienna, 20 – 21 June 2018

Ambassador Ms. Helen Eduards

Swedish Permanent Mission to Vienna

Madame Chair,

Let me begin by thanking you for chairing this session as well as Director Di Pippo and the UNOOSA for the hard work in preparing for UNISPACE+50.

This meeting is the result of three years' preparations. Many stakeholders – states, industry, private sector, academia, civil society - have been actively engaged. I believe that this broad preparatory process is significant of how space activities and space policies have evolved in the past 50 years. Outer space activities are no longer limited to states but undertaken by an increasing number of actors.

Space services and technology are drivers for socioeconomic development and scientific progress, as well as important tools to tackle many of the major global challenges. And there is enormous potential to develop these services even further for the benefit of all mankind.

Through earth observations it is possible to gather extensive data that can be used to help us tackle challenges on our planet. The Paris agreement is only one illustration of the growing recognition of outer space as an enabler for achieving global challenges and goals.

Space is a global common. We need to make sure that all states will be able to reap the benefits. The Space 2030 Agenda will serve as an excellent basis and as a framework to bridge the space divide and to provide access for all. The Space 2030 agenda will, directly as well as indirectly, contribute to the fulfilment of the international agreed Sustainable Development Goals.

But this will only happen, if we manage outer space in a sustainable and responsible way. Future progress depends on a sustainable, secure and peaceful space environment. In this regard, Sweden welcomes the work undertaken by COPUOS to establish Long Term Sustainable Guidelines. After 8 years of negotiations we

look forward to the adoption of these guidelines as one of the deliverables in this year of the fourth UNISPACE conference. It underlines the importance of the Committee and its subsidiary bodies and exemplifies the progress that can be achieved when the global community work together.

Non-legally binding measures - such as the Long Term Sustainable Guidelines – can play an important role in ensuring the long-term sustainability and safety of the outer space environment.

Furthermore, Sweden sees a need for legally-binding measures established through the UN framework. We are ready to discuss and support such initiatives.

International cooperation on and multilateral solutions to outer space affairs is key. Space weather is for instance one area of global interest where collaboration and coordination between stakeholders at international level is needed.

Through the membership in ESA, Sweden takes part in research and development programs. The services and data provided by the EU space programmes, Copernicus and Galileo are important to meet societal needs and to support policy making.

Sweden appreciates efforts by the UNOOSA and others to highlight the role of women in space and the need to improve gender balance in the space sector. Gender is not only smart policy it is a necessity.

Sweden has been an actor in space for a long time. We remain at the forefront of developments with a capable space industry, cutting-edge research and Esrange Space Centre. Esrange will continue to be modernised to serve as a strategic resource for national and international research, development, demonstration, test activities and other space-related activities.

Last month, the Swedish government presented a space policy to parliament. It is a comprehensive space policy, with the benefits for society as a starting point. The Swedish National Space Agency will have a central role in the implementation of the strategy.

One of the goals in the strategy is that Swedish space activities should contribute to Agenda 2030 and the global sustainable development goals. The Swedish space industry is already contributing with technology and know-how in areas such as space physics and atmospheric research, which in turn can contribute to global environmental and climate observations. We have a program of small, capable and

low-cost satellites intended for scientific research missions in Low Earth Orbit. The first satellite in this program is MATS that will be launched in 2019.

Madame Chair,

UNISPACE + 50 is a celebration of the past 50 years work of COPUOS. But UNISPACE + 50 is not an end of a process. It is a beginning – creating a foundation for the continued multilateral conversation on space and space policies for the coming years.

Sweden welcomes the opportunity UNISPACE+ 50 has provided in strengthening the Committee, its subsidiary bodies as well as the Office for Outer Space Affairs to ensure their continued relevance in a rapidly developing space sector.

For our part, we will continue supporting efforts in COPUOS and elsewhere to strengthen the international legal framework for outer space. Sweden will promote the sustainable use of outer space for peaceful purposes, for the benefit of human welfare, development and research. We will work to prevent an arms race in outer space and to ensure that outer space does not become an arena for conflict. We will support efforts to enhance transparency and openness of the space environment and the sharing of information from space applications.

We look forward to working together with all delegations to accomplish these goals.

I thank you.