

**AFRICAN GROUP STATEMENT DURING THE SIXTY-
SEVENTH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS
COMMITTEE ON THE PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE**

**TO BE DELIVERED BY H.E AMBASSADOR PHILBERT
JOHNSON OF PERMANENT MISSION OF GHANA AND
CHAIR OF THE AFRICA GROUP**

ITEM 5: GENERAL EXCHANGE OF VIEWS

19TH – 28TH June 2024

Mr Chair,

1. On behalf of the African Group, please allow me to take this opportunity to congratulate you, Mr. Sherif Mohamed Sedky of Egypt, on your election as the Chair of the 67th Session of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer space. The Group would like to assure you of its full support and cooperation and wishes to thank your predecessor, Mr Omram Sharaf of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) for his outstanding leadership and dedication to a successful conclusion of the previous session. *(Agreed ad ref)*
2. We would also like to thank Ms. Aart Holla-Maini, Director of the Office for Outer Space for her opening remarks, and the Secretariat for the excellent preparations made for this session. *(Agreed ad ref)*
3. The group aligns itself with the statement delivered by H.E. Laura Gil, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Colombia on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. *(Agreed ad ref)*

Mr Chair,

4. The African Group attaches great importance to the work of this committee in enhancing international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space and its benefits to all nations and encourages other members of the African Group to consider joining the Committee either as members or observers to contribute to the diverse and dynamic composition of the Committee. *(Agreed ad ref)*
5. The African Group stresses that international cooperation in space exploration and the use of space technology applications remains a priority for the African continent and the Group's participation is guided by the established principles of outer space activities, namely, the principle of exploration and use of outer space on the basis of equality, the principle of the non-appropriation of outer space including the moon and other celestial bodies, and the peaceful uses of outer space for the benefit of all. Consequently, it is imperative to promote equal, non-discriminatory access to outer space, irrespective of levels of socio-economic or scientific development and should be cognizant of developing country needs. *(Agreed ad ref)*
6. The Group acknowledges the critical role the Committee of Peaceful Uses of Outer space and its two subcommittees play in promoting international cooperation in the exploration and peaceful uses of outer space and in the utilisation of space science and technology for sustainable economic and social development. The Group is cognizant

that the benefits derived from outer space activities is linked to achieving the Development Goals of Agenda 2030 and aspirations contained in Africa's blueprint for socio-economic development, Agenda 2063. *(Agreed ad ref)*

Mr Chair

7. As a continent still unlocking its true potential, the African Group reiterates that benefits of outer space are cross cutting in terms of disaster management, agriculture, health, education and sustainable development and attaches great importance to the Space2030 Agenda as adopted in Resolution 76/3 with the firm conviction that it outlines an inclusive and long-term strategy aimed at utilizing the space tools to achieve the global initiatives of the UN namely; the Sustainable Development Goals, the Sendai Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change addressing long-term sustainable development concerns of humankind. Accordingly, the Group calls for the mobilization of appropriate and sufficient resources to enable the Office to render necessary upon request and through UNOOSA's capacity building programmes to developing countries. *(Agreed ad ref)*
8. In this context, the group welcomes the active participation of its members in the various UNOOSA programmes, as reflected in the activities carried out by the UNSPIDER Regional Support Offices in Algeria, Nigeria and Kenya, as well as increasing the number of African countries on the International Committee on Global Navigation Satellite Systems (ICG) following Algeria's accession to the Committee in 2023. *(Agreed ad ref)*
9. Recognizing the critical role of space in addressing developmental challenges, the African Union developed a Science, Technology, and Innovation Strategy for Africa (STISA-2024) with a focus towards developing a coordinated African space process as part of the scientific leg of the African Agenda 2063. The Group is confident and remains hopeful that the African Union Space Programme and Strategy will generate new impetus across Africa and significantly increase the participation of all African States in space activities. *(Agreed ad ref)*
10. The African continent is committed to expanding its work in the field of space affairs through initiatives such as the African Space Week, which provides an innovative platform for African space industry stakeholders to strengthen efforts to promote and enable intra-Africa and international cooperation on space-related activities. *(Agreed ad ref)*

11. The Group expresses appreciation for the work of the African Regional Centre for Space Science and Technology Education located in Morocco and Nigeria and calls upon UNCOPUOS to continue supporting the Regional Centres as well as other regional initiatives to promote greater African excellence and improved participation of women and youth, especially in STEM. *(Agreed ad ref)*
12. The African Group calls upon UNCOPUOS Member States, particularly developed countries to extend benefits derived from outer space activities and provide capacity building and technical assistance to assist developing countries in strengthening capacity in the space sector and effective implementation of countries Space Programmes. *(Agreed ad ref)*
13. In this regard, it is also important to highlight the collective efforts of the African continent to advance its space aspirations through the African Space Strategy and the African Space Agency (AfSA) in Cairo. The African Space Agency aims to implement and achieve common development goals for the African Continent in the realm of outer space. *(Agreed ad ref)*
14. The Group reiterates its call for closer coordination and enhanced cooperation with the African Union through the office of the Commissioner in charge of education, science, technology, and innovation, Professor Mohammed Belhocine from Algeria, to further the global space agenda which benefits all mankind. *(Agreed ad ref)*
15. The Africa Group underscores its concern on the use of nuclear power sources in outer space for the Group due to potential risks of collisions and accidental re-entry in the earth atmosphere of space objects using nuclear power sources. The African Group calls upon space actors to avail all necessary information and safety measures for space objects using nuclear sources. *(Agreed ad ref)*

Mr Chair,

16. The Group welcomes the progress made in the Working Group on the general exchange of views on potential legal models for activities in exploration, exploitation, and utilization of space resources and reiterates its call for greater coordination at the international level to ensure the continued peaceful and sustainable use of outer space, the moon and other space objects to ensure that such activities were carried out in accordance with international law and for the benefit of all. *(Agreed ad ref)*

17. The Group also welcomes the progress made in the Working Group Long-Term Sustainability of Outer Space activities in carrying out the work plan for the period 2022-2026 and working towards the implementation of the guidelines aimed to promote safety, sustainability, and security of activities in outer space. *(Agreed ad ref)*

Mr Chair,

18. The Group expresses appreciation for the inclusion of “Dark and Quiet Skies, Astronomy and Large Constellation: Addressing emerging issues and challenges” as a standalone item on the STSC agenda to address the challenges posed by increasing deployment of mega-constellations in the Lower Earth Orbit (LEO) to ground-based.
(Agreed ad ref)
19. The Group welcomes the 5th edition of the Space4Women Expert Meeting that will be held in Nairobi, Kenya, from 27th to 29th November 2024 under the auspices of UNOOSA’s Space4Women initiative. This is the first time the meeting is being hosted in Africa, where women participation in space and generally in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) is still way below the global average.
20. The meeting will therefore, serve to raise awareness and inspire women participation in space and specifically, the girl child in pursuing foundational subjects in STEM for future careers in space science and technologies. This is expected to contribute to more women in STEM workforce and more participation in the space economy. Considering women account for half of the population in Africa, and constitute the bedrock of economic activity on the continent, this will have significant impact in realization of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through inclusivity and participation of every gender. It will also further the realization of Aspiration 6 of the African Union's Agenda 2063: “An Africa, whose development is people-driven, relying on the potential of African people, especially its women and youth, and caring for children”.. *(Agreed ad ref)*
21. In conclusion, let me reiterate the commitment of Africa towards the peaceful uses of Outer Space. To this end, African States will continue to raise awareness to the important role of mobilizing resources to support space science and technology in Africa’s socio-economic development. *(Agreed ad ref)*

I thank you.