



Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Iran
to the United Nations Office and other International Organizations in Vienna

Statement by the Delegation of the Islamic Republic of Iran
Sixty-seventh session of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space
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Mr. Chairman,

We extend our heartfelt congratulations on your appointment. We are confident in your leadership to steer our discussions towards meaningful and impactful resolutions. Your assumption of this pivotal role comes at a time when our collective efforts toward peaceful use of outer space are more crucial than ever.

As a nation striving towards progress, we admire the strides made in outer space exploration for peaceful purposes. The record number of objects now orbiting signifies a collective ambition that transcends borders, cultures, and economies. Despite these advancements, a critical analysis reveals a stark imbalance. The space sector, while flourishing, is dominated by a handful of nations with the advanced technological capabilities and financial resources to invest heavily in space exploration. This has led to an unfortunate situation where the ‘space divide’ mirrors the economic divide on Earth. The growing interest in space has not translated into equal opportunities for developing countries, which often lack the infrastructure, expertise, and resources to participate meaningfully in space activities.

The discussions at this august body underscore the urgent need for addressing Issues such as the equitable use of the geostationary orbit, exploitation of space resources, and the legal implications of mega-constellations. The current frameworks governing space activities do not adequately address the concerns of developing countries, which

are at risk of being left behind in the space race. We hold the conviction that the current legal framework requires to be strengthened to guarantee that outer space remains the common heritage of humankind. It is imperative to facilitate universal access, with a particular emphasis on empowering developing nations, to outer space and its resources.

For developing countries, international cooperation and capacity-building in space knowledge and technology is a necessity for their contribution to mankind's endeavor for exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes. The transfer of knowledge and technology to these nations shall be prioritized. Selective approaches towards assisting member states shall be strictly avoided. The 'Space for Sustainable Development' initiative should be a platform for empowerment, not just a slogan. It is essential to ensure that the benefits of space technology are distributed equitably, enabling all nations to contribute to and benefit from the space economy. We must also advocate for a more inclusive and equitable space environment. The future of space exploration and its benefits should not be the privilege of a few but the shared heritage of all humankind.

In adherence to its international commitments under prevailing space treaties, the Islamic Republic of Iran continues to develop its peaceful space endeavors. The 'Pars-1' satellite, an advanced remote-sensing instrument, was successfully deployed on February 29, 2024. This satellite is a testament to Iran's self-reliant scientific capabilities, having been meticulously designed, constructed, and tested using indigenous knowledge and technology. The launch was facilitated by international cooperation. The Islamic Republic of Iran reaffirms its dedication to deepening meaningful international cooperation and partnership, striving to generate mutual benefits through cooperative space exploration and utilization.

Mr. Chairman,

The development of satellite mega-constellations could lead to the saturation of important layers of Low Earth Orbit, as well as limitation in access to this strategic region by developing states. In addition, the expansion of satellite mega-constellations could even increase the risk of collisions for spacecraft passing through these crowded orbits. All space operations, including satellite constellations, must follow international law and respect national sovereignty. Despite the ITU Radio Regulations Board's explicit decision during its 94th meeting, which emphasized that unauthorized STARLINK transmissions within the Islamic Republic of Iran's territory violate pertinent ITU regulations and resolutions, the United States, as an associated administration, has not yet adhered to this ruling. The Islamic Republic of Iran reaffirms its dedication to resolving this matter under the applicable international laws, including those outlined by the ITU, as reflected in the ITU RRB's decision. Furthermore, Iran reserves its sovereign right to undertake appropriate measures consistent with international law to preserve its territorial integrity.

Mr. Chairman,

The mitigation of space debris has become an issue as the number of space objects orbiting the Earth has grown exponentially in recent decades. Space debris poses a threat. The space-leading nations especially bear a significant responsibility to address this growing problem. We believe that any steps towards addressing this issue shall ensure the fostering of a cooperative environment that does not impede the rights of developing states to partake in the exploration and use of outer space.

Mr. Chairman,

Given that space resources are the common heritage of all humankind, the exploitation of these resources must be governed strictly within the bounds of space laws and regulations. Considering the existing international space law, the notion of 'safety zones' on celestial bodies such as the Moon and Mars has raised concern, particularly regarding the equitable utilization of outer space. Such measures could potentially contravene the foundational tenets of the 1967 Outer Space Treaty, specifically those

articulated in Articles 2, 6, and 9, which emphasize non-appropriation, international responsibility, and the conduct of activities in space with due regard to the interests of all countries.

Mr. Chairman,

Developing countries suffer from a lack of expertise as well as enough experience in space operations and space situational awareness (SSA). This hampers their ability to make informed decisions and effectively participate in international space traffic management efforts. Additionally, many countries often lack sufficient access to comprehensive data on the space environment and the accurate, up-to-date locations of space objects. To protect valuable space assets and maintain safety in the space environment, advanced modeling capabilities to predict close approaches of space objects and orbital maneuvers to avoid collisions are required. To do so, countries require software and hardware that are not readily available to many member countries. Lack of Indigenous SSA capabilities along with dependence on data-sharing limits developing countries from responding promptly to potential collisions.

Mr. Chairman,

I conclude my statement by emphasizing that the Islamic Republic of Iran champions a future where every nation is empowered to contribute to and reap the benefits from outer space, ensuring its preservation for future generations. In this spirit, my delegation eagerly anticipates collaborating with you and other delegations to ensure a fruitful session of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS).