

**Statement of the Pakistan Delegation at the
67th Session of the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of
Outer Space
19 - 28 June 2024**

Agenda Item No. 5 - General Exchange of Views

Mr. Chair, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen

At the outset, my delegations would like to join others in expressing our felicitations to you on becoming the new Chair of the Committee. My delegation also wishes to congratulate the new Bureau with Pakistan joining as Second Vice Chair and Rapporteur. I can assure you of our full support and cooperation for a very productive session that will promote peaceful uses of outer space.

We also take this opportunity to thank the Director UNOOSA, Ms. Aarti Holamaini, and the Secretariat for the preparations made for this session.

Pakistan aligns itself with the statement of the Group of 77 and China and have the following remarks to make in our national capacity.

Mr. Chair,

We reaffirm our belief that space is the common heritage of humankind and is not subject to national appropriation by claims of sovereignty. It should be used for peaceful purposes and should remain accessible to all nations on non-discriminatory basis, irrespective of their level of scientific, technical or economic development. Space is also a finite and fragile resource and must be treated as a global commons. Like any other natural resource, it needs to be preserved and protected in a manner so as to ensure equity and access in its uses for all nations. In accordance with this belief, Pakistan has ratified all five United Nations space treaties governing the peaceful uses and long term sustainability of outer space.

As a space emerging nation, the prime focus of Pakistan's national space program is the pursuit of sustainable socio-economic progress. In this regard, the Government of Pakistan has approved its national space policy last year which provides a framework for effectively harnessing space technologies and applications towards this objective. The policy involves local stakeholders and is in line with UN space laws and standards, fostering peaceful uses and contributing to sustainable use of outer space.

The Government of Pakistan has also approved the Space Activities Rules, demonstrating our firm commitment to advancing space activities within the country.

These space related national legislations underscore the critical need for sustained governmental commitment and clear policy directives to ensure the long-term success and sustainability of Pakistan's space program.

Mr. Chair

Pakistan has been actively participating in international space initiatives. In 2023, Pakistan joined the International Lunar Research Station (ILRS) program, a collaborative lunar research project for multi-purpose scientific research. On May 3, 2024, Pakistan launched the iCUBE-Qamar satellite onboard China's Chang'E 6 mission. This marks a significant step in Pakistan's space endeavours as iCUBE-Q is part of the country's efforts to advance its space technology and capabilities. Furthermore, Pakistan is planning to send a rover to the lunar south pole onboard the upcoming Chang'E-8 mission to enhance the in-situ analysis and align with on-going research initiatives. Pakistan remains committed to contribute to lunar exploration and leveraging international partnerships to enhance its space exploration capabilities.

Pakistan has also launched its Pakistan Multi-Mission Communication Satellite PakSat-MM1 on 30 May 2024, from China. PakSat-MM1 has been developed as part of Pakistan's National Space Program 2047. The primary goal of this satellite is to enhance Pakistan's communication and connectivity infrastructure. PakSat-MM1 will leverage advanced communication technologies to support various services, contributing to the nation's socio-economic development and its efforts to transform into a Digital Pakistan. The satellite will play a crucial role in improving telecommunication, broadcasting, and internet services across the country, especially providing services in remote areas. Additionally, it will support the growth of Pakistan's technology sector, fostering innovation and development.

Mr. Chair,

I would like to inform that Pakistan is pursuing a multifaceted international space cooperation program. Pakistan is member of the International Astronautical Federation (IAF), the Committee on Space Research (COSPAR), the Asia-Pacific Space Cooperation Organization (APSCO), the Asia-Pacific Regional Space Agency Forum (APRSAF) and actively takes part in their activities. In addition, SUPARCO hosts the UN-SPIDER Regional Support Office, Mission Control Centre of COSPAS-SARSAT and the Inter-Islamic Network on Space Sciences & Technology (ISNET). Pakistan is also participating in various projects and programs being undertaken under the framework of bilateral and multilateral space cooperation agreements with international organizations and states for the achievement of milestones of its National Space Program – 2047.

Pakistan is also the host country and founding member of Inter-Islamic Network on Space Sciences and Technology (ISNET), established in 1987 as an inter-

governmental organization having international status. Pakistan being the secretariat of ISNET makes utmost efforts to utilize this platform for the benefit of OIC countries and help them develop their capabilities in the best possible way. To improve the capacity building of ISNET member states. This year, the 14th Governing Body Meeting (GBM) will be held in October 2024 in Tehran, Iran, which will be attended by high level officials from ISNET, COMSTECH and focal point organizations of ISNET member states.

Moreover, Pakistan will also host the International Conference on Space Science and Technology (ICSAT) scheduled to be held in 2025. The event is being co-organised by the Institute of Space Technology (IST) in Pakistan, in collaboration with ISNET and international organisations, such as Asia-Pacific Space Cooperation Organization (APSCO) and Islamic World Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ICESCO). The conference, themed as 'Space for Sustainable Development', is expected to be attended by over 50 keynote speakers and experts from the global space sector and more than 350 researchers and scientists from all over the world. It will be an opportune platform for presenting cutting edge knowledge, technologies and discussing efficient space based solutions to address global challenges.

Mr. Chair,

Pakistan expresses its concern at the emerging trend towards unilateral national legislation governing space activities which may be at odds with international instruments and obligations. Similarly, while voluntary norms to regulate behaviour in space are useful, they cannot be a substitute for legally binding instruments. The international legal regime governing and regulating space activities needs to evolve in order to ensure the rule of law in outer space; safety, security and sustainability of space operations; as well as equitable access to space for all states without any discrimination.

We also believe that the normative and legal framework governing exploration, exploitation and utilisation of space resources must be consistent with existing international space law i.e. five UN space treaties particularly the Outer Space Treaty and fully respect the principles of non-appropriation and equitable access.

In similar vein, we also reiterate that the evolving framework on long term sustainability must not impose undue and unreasonably high standards and obligations which might be prejudicial to the interests of developing and space emerging countries by limiting their access.

Moreover, developing countries continue to face considerable technical and financial hurdles that prevent them from fully benefiting from space technologies. Robust international cooperation for capacity building, technical assistance and technology transfer are of vital importance to ensure that developing nations can meaningfully enjoy their rights in the exploration, access and use of outer space for

sustainable development. This august forum must play its due role in addressing this challenge.

Mr. Chair,

Global Navigation Satellite Systems have become an integral part of our societies and economies. In this regard, Pakistan views the International Committee on Global Navigation Satellite Systems (ICG) as making a valuable contribution to sustainable development by promoting compatibility, interoperability and transparency among different satellite navigation systems. This important committee's work holds particular relevance to developing countries such as Pakistan which are interested in using GNSS for socioeconomic growth and sustainable development and attaches great importance to GNSS applications. Pakistan has long been participating in the ICG's meetings as an observer.

In order to further enhance its cooperation with the ICG, Pakistan applied for its membership in 2021. Our application was strongly supported by all members of the Committee on its technical merits except for one member which refused to join consensus for extraneous, political reasons.

Pakistan understands that the objective and *raison d'être* of the ICG is to facilitate and promote compatibility, interoperability and transparency among different GNSSs through constructive and good faith engagement among its members. The ICG will not be able to pursue its stated objectives effectively if countries, which can contribute to its technical work, continue to be excluded for short-sighted political point scoring. We hope that technical considerations will retain merit and Pakistan can finally join this important platform at the earliest.

Mr. Chair,

In conclusion, we look forward to a fruitful exchange of views among member states during this session of the Committee.

I thank you.
