



STATEMENT BY THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA
68TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS COMMITTEE ON THE PEACEFUL
USES OF OUTER SPACE

TO BE DELIVERED BY H.E AMBASSADOR RAPULANE MOLEKANE
AGENDA ITEM 5: GENERAL EXCHANGE OF VIEWS

Date: 25 June 2025

**Chairperson,
Distinguished Delegates,**

On behalf of the South African Government, I wish to congratulate you, Mr Sherif Mohamed Sedky, on your assumption as Chair and extend my delegation's warm wishes on your Chairmanship during this 2025 plenary session.

My delegation also wishes, at the outset, to commend the work carried out by the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs (UNOOSA), including its Director Ms Aarti Holla-Maini; and the Secretariat for their dedicated work in the preparations for this meeting.

South Africa remains committed to multilateralism and international cooperation as central tenets in the governance of outer space. As a member of the African Union and G20 Presidency holder in 2025, we recognise the critical importance of inclusive global governance in space and are working to ensure Africa's voice and priorities are reflected in multilateral space fora.

In recent years, South Africa has made strategic investments in space infrastructure and capabilities, most notably through the Space Infrastructure Hub (SIH) programme. This initiative will enhance capabilities in Earth observation, communications, and space-based services. The SIH is designed to serve both national and continental priorities.

South Africa supports the development of open-access data platforms and interoperability frameworks to ensure that Earth observation and climate data serve communities in need.

Chairperson,

South Africa supports the present conference room paper which was prepared by the Secretariat on the basis of information received from the National Space Society on Space Traffic Management (STM) with legal challenges and considerations. My delegation appreciates the ongoing work on STM and supports a balanced approach that promotes safety, transparency, and predictability while safeguarding access for emerging nations. We advocate for inclusive dialogue to ensure that developing countries are not excluded from shaping global STM frameworks and standards.

Chairperson,

South Africa is also committed to empowering the youth to take up leadership roles in the space sector by equipping them with relevant skills, education and expertise. The process also hosts a series of training workshops to empower authorities and decision-makers to incorporate Earth Observation (EO) into their business operations, focusing on spatial planning, environmental management, natural resource utilization, and disaster management and reporting.

Most recently South Africa hosted the African Regional Round: Manfred Lachs Space Law Moot Court Competition. Participating teams came from Nigeria, Kenya, Uganda, Zimbabwe and South Africa. Strathmore University of Kenya, won the Regionals, securing the top spot and the honour of representing the African region at the global finals at the 75th International Astronautical Congress (IAC) in Sydney, Australia, later this year.

The rapid increase in the number of teams participating from Universities across Africa is testimony to the interest that is being generated each year by this exciting Competition. The result of this will be an ever-increasing pool of African law graduates schooled in Space law, who will work in this multidisciplinary area of space to the benefit of Africa.

Chairperson

South Africa supports the agenda item titled “Dark and Quiet Skies, Astronomy and Large Constellations: Addressing Emerging Issues and Challenges” as a standing item through the years 2026 to 2029, and calls for sustained, in-depth deliberation on the topic.

South Africa also supports the proposed policy considerations and future mitigations and suggestions to all Member States for immediate actions that they can take to support the possible coexistence of satellite constellations and astronomical research. As a result, South Africa is looking at appointing a technical expert to contribute to Focus Groups of technical and policy experts, and to articulate on these important issues.

Chairperson,

In conclusion, South Africa reiterates its commitment to preserving outer space as a global common governed by inclusive and transparent multilateralism. We remain ready to work alongside Member States to ensure outer space is preserved for peaceful purposes for present and future generations. We affirm our full support for the Chair and wish this session every success.

I thank You.