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Statement of the Pakistan Delegation at the
68th Session of the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space
25 June - 02 July 2025

Agenda Item No. 04 - General Exchange of Views [FULL VERSION]

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. 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 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 is carrying out work as per its national space policy 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 is effectively utilizing space technology towards socio economic development of the country in diverse fields such as agriculture, health, water management, meteorology, climate change mitigation, humanitarian assistance, disaster management, satellite navigation and communication. Over the past year, we have seen remarkable advancements in agricultural productivity through the use of satellite-based monitoring systems, which have provided our farmers with crucial real-time data on crop health, soil moisture and weather patterns.

A recent flagship initiative includes the launch of a mobile application that provides tailored satellite-based solutions to agricultural businesses. Through this application, SUPARCO, Pakistan's national space agency, offers real-time remote sensing data to facilitate precision farming, improve resource efficiency, and enhance agricultural productivity and sustainability. Pakistan has also employed space-based technologies to support the sustainable management of forests, which are an essential part of our ecosystem. Through the use of high resolution satellite imagery, we have monitored deforestation trends and forest cover, allowing for more effective enforcement of environmental regulations and the promotion of reforestation efforts.

Similarly, in the area of environmental monitoring and disaster management, SUPARCO hosts the UN-SPIDER Regional Support Office and has joined hands with the National Disaster Risk Management Fund (NDRMF) –a government-owned entity that finances projects aimed at enhancing Pakistan's resilience to climate and disaster risks– for the development of the Natural Catastrophe (Nat Cat) Model. This pioneering initiative, the first of its kind in the region, uses geo-referenced data to assess disaster risks from both hydro-meteorological hazards such as floods, droughts, and tropical cyclones, and geophysical hazards. The model aims to provide comprehensive risk assessments, vulnerability analysis, and financial impact projections at the sub-district level, thereby supporting risk-informed investment decisions and enhancing national resilience.

These critical applications of space technology are now being further enhanced by Pakistan's growing indigenous capabilities in Earth observation. The successful launch of PRSC-EO1, Pakistan's first indigenously developed electro-optical satellite, marks a significant milestone in this journey. With its advanced imaging capabilities, PRSC-EO1 will provide higher-resolution data to support all these initiatives - from precision agriculture and forest management to disaster risk assessment - while reducing our dependence on foreign satellite sources. This achievement demonstrates Pakistan's commitment to developing homegrown space solutions for sustainable development.

Mr. Chair,

Pakistan is cognizant of the vital role of international cooperation in advancing space exploration and deeply values its enduring partnerships with space-faring nations and multilateral organizations. It is reflected in Pakistan's membership in International Astronautical Federation (IAF), Committee on Space Research (COSPAR), Asia-Pacific Space Cooperation Organization (APSCO), and Asia-Pacific Regional Space Agency Forum (APRSAF). Moreover, SUPARCO also hosts the UN-SPIDER Regional Support Office, the Mission Control Centre of COSPAS-SARSAT and serves as the secretariat of Inter-Islamic Network on Space Science & Technology (ISNET).

Building on this robust multilateral engagement, Pakistan has also achieved significant milestones through strategic bilateral partnerships. In this context, we are pleased to share that Pakistan has signed an agreement with the People's Republic of China to train and send a Pakistani astronaut to the Tiangong space station—a historic milestone that will mark the first time a foreign national visits the station. Additionally, a Memorandum of Understanding has been concluded to facilitate the deployment of Pakistan's first indigenously developed lunar rover aboard China's upcoming Chang'e-8 mission, targeting the Moon's South Pole. This rover will carry scientific payloads to study lunar soil composition, radiation levels, and plasma properties, as well as to test novel technologies essential for a sustainable human presence on the Moon. Notably, it will also house a collaborative payload developed by Chinese and European researchers. These initiatives reflect Pakistan's strong commitment to fostering peaceful, inclusive, and mutually beneficial partnerships in the domain of outer space.

I would also like to share that SUPARCO actively organizes international conferences, workshops and training on different themes of space science, technology and applications. These international events aim to strengthen local academia industry linkage while fostering international cooperation. This year, the International Conference on Applications of Space Science and Technology (ICAST) is scheduled to be held in Nov 2025. The conference, themed as 'Space for Sustainable Development', is expected to be attended by keynote speakers and experts from the global space sector and 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.

In this vein, we support all the work being conducted under COPUOS to ensure benefits to all Member States. We also extend our full support to the ongoing work of the Action Team on Lunar Activities Consultations (ATLAC), Co-Chaired by Pakistan and Romania, to develop recommendations which will facilitate and benefit all Member States equally and equitably.

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'etre* 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.

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