

Statement by the Islamic Republic of Iran

on Agenda Item 12

“General exchange of views on the application of international law to small satellite activities”

Mr. Chair,

The Islamic Republic of Iran believes that expanding emerging space technologies, particularly the development and utilization of small satellites, offers unprecedented opportunities for developing countries to access outer space technologies and applications at significantly lower costs. Iran underscores that small satellites, such as CubeSats, play an important role in facilitating access to space, advancing communication infrastructure, monitoring the environment, enhancing educational and research capacities, and even managing natural disasters, especially for developing nations. From this perspective, such technologies must serve the broader goal of sustainable development and meet the specific needs of developing countries.

In this regard, the Islamic Republic of Iran supports inclusive multilateral dialogue and the exchange of views within the framework of the COPOUS to ensure a comprehensive and equitable approach to this emerging phenomenon. We emphasize that the principles of fairness, non-discrimination, equal opportunities, and equitable access to orbital slots and frequency spectrums should guide any discussion on this issue.

Addressing the legal and operational challenges faced by small satellites requires broad international cooperation, including the sharing of data related to Space Situational Awareness (SSA) and the exchange of technical expertise. Without sharing SSA data, particularly with developing countries, overcoming these challenges would not be possible. Furthermore, we believe that states contributing most significantly to the congestion of low Earth orbits bear a greater legal responsibility to mitigate space debris so that orbital congestion does not impede the space activities of developing nations.

Drawing on its successful experience in the design, manufacture, and launch of indigenous small satellites, the Islamic Republic of Iran believes that the advancement of this technology can play a vital role in disaster risk management, water resource governance, and beyond. However, the imposition of unjust unilateral coercive measures (UCMs) and the resulting restrictions on access to advanced technologies have hindered international cooperation. The removal of such measures would create a conducive environment for the

exchange of space-related knowledge and technologies within the framework of international law. We believe that eliminating these barriers would support the technological progress of developing countries in achieving their developmental goals.

The Islamic Republic of Iran highlights the importance of international cooperation to address both the legal and technical challenges related to small satellites and invites all Member States, international organizations, and specialized agencies to share technical knowledge and facilitate the transfer of peaceful space technologies, thereby enabling effective participation of developing countries in the space domain through small satellite activities. In line with the principles governing the peaceful uses of outer space, we also emphasize the importance of promoting bilateral and multilateral cooperation and harnessing collective capacities to advance global scientific and technological objectives.

The Islamic Republic of Iran welcomes joint initiatives such as KiboCUBE and other educational and research programs on small satellites promoted by the Office for Outer Space Affairs and other international entities. We regard such initiatives as key instruments to enhance the scientific and technological capacities of developing countries. We also call for the provision of financial, technical, and educational assistance by developed States, international organizations, and private sector actors to enable more active participation of developing countries in the global space value chain.

In conclusion, we express our appreciation for the efforts of all States, international organizations, and regional entities in fostering a constructive and respectful dialogue on this emerging domain.

Thank you.