

Statement by the Delegation of the Islamic Republic of Iran

The Sixty-second Session of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee of COPUOS

Agenda Item 10: Long-term sustainability of outer space activities

3-14 February 2025 - Vienna, Austria

Madam Chair,

To achieve long-term sustainability of outer space activities we need a comprehensive and holistic approach. One critical element of LTS shall be the consideration of the challenges posed by space debris, particularly for emerging spacefaring nations that face heightened risks due to financial and technological constraints. The rapid expansion of space activities has led to an increase in space debris, which disproportionately affects countries still in the process of developing their space programs.

While developed nations have historically contributed to the majority of space debris, it is the developing countries—often lacking adequate resources and mitigation capabilities—that may bear the burden. The risk of collisions with debris threatens not only their satellites but also the continuity and long-term viability of their space programs.

To address this inequity and ensure the sustainability of space activities, the Islamic Republic of Iran recommends the CIPOUS and its subcommittees consider the **establishment of a fund** to support developing countries that experience damage to their satellites due to space debris. This fund would provide essential assistance to emerging spacefaring countries in mitigating the consequences of debris-related incidents.

The support offered by this fund could take multiple forms, including:

- **Financial assistance** for the repair or replacement of damaged satellites.
- **Capacity-building initiatives**, such as training programs, technical workshops, and research grants enhance the capabilities of developing countries in managing space debris risks.
- **Cooperation mechanisms** to facilitate access to advanced debris mitigation technologies.

Such an initiative would not only alleviate the immediate impacts of space debris but also contribute to the long-term stability and inclusivity of space activities. By ensuring that developing nations remain active participants in the global space community, we can foster a more equitable and cooperative space environment.

Moreover, the establishment of this fund would reinforce the principles of **space equity** aligning with international commitments such as the Outer Space Treaty, which underscores the importance of cooperation in the peaceful use of outer space. By supporting this initiative, Member States—particularly those with advanced space capabilities—can demonstrate their commitment to a just and sustainable future in space, where all nations can pursue their space ambitions without undue hardship.

This proposal differs from the **Convention on International Liability for Damage Caused by Space Objects (Liability Convention)**. The **Liability Convention** establishes a framework for holding a launching state liable for damage caused by its space objects, including compensation claims for harm inflicted on other states. However, it does not comprehensively address the **cumulative and long-term risks posed by space debris**, which often results from decades of space debris rather than a single identifiable launching state. This proposal advocates for a **proactive and collective approach** by establishing a **dedicated fund** to assist developing countries affected by space debris, regardless of whether the responsible entity can be identified.

The Islamic Republic of Iran considers this proposal as a step toward ensuring that all countries, regardless of their level of development, can access and benefit from space activities without being disproportionately affected by the consequences of past space endeavors.

Thank you