

Check Against Delivery

Statement by the Pakistan Delegation at the 62nd Session of the Scientific & Technical Subcommittee (STSC) of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS);

03 - 14 February 2025, Vienna, Austria

Agenda Item No. 03: General Exchange of Views

Thank you Chair

We would like to join other delegations in expressing our felicitations to you on continuing the chairpersonship of the 62nd session of this Subcommittee and assure you of our full support and cooperation for a very productive session that will advance the cause of peaceful uses of outer space.

We also recognize the work done by the Secretariat in preparation of this current session of the subcommittee.

With due regard to the time, I will be delivering a short version of Pakistan's statement and request the Secretariat to make the full version available for record.

Chair,

We would like to 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. 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.

Also, as a space emerging nation, the prime focus of Pakistan's national space programme is the pursuit of sustainable socio-economic progress. In this regard, I am happy to share that Pakistan has recently formulated and approved a national space policy which will provide the framework for effectively harnessing space technologies and applications towards this objective. The policy has been prepared in line with and to ensure adherence to relevant international instruments and standards, fostering peaceful uses and contributing to responsible and sustainable use of outer space.

In addition, presently, Pakistan has five operational satellites in space. These include three remote sensing satellites, PRSS-1, PakTES-1 and Electro Optical-1 (EO-1); the latter was launched in January 2025 and uses electro-optical sensors to collect data and images of the Earth's surface by detecting and measuring reflected sunlight or emitted radiation which will boost Pakistan's ability to monitor and manage natural

resources, respond to disasters and improve urban planning and agricultural development. In addition, Pakistan also has two active communication satellites, PakSat 1R and PakSat-MM1; the latter launched in May 2024 to improve telecommunication, broadcasting, and internet services across the country, especially providing services in remote areas. The data acquired through these satellites is being used in diverse fields such as urban planning, transport, water resource management, agriculture, public health, disaster management, as well as environmental pollution and climate change.

Pakistan's Space Agency, SUPARCO, has recently also launched a mobile application which empowers both small and large-scale farmers, as well as agricultural businesses, with tailored solutions to meet their specific needs. Through this application, SUPARCO offers remote sensing solutions that enable farmers and businesses to leverage satellite monitoring for precise farm management and timely interventions, thereby enhancing agricultural productivity and sustainability.

Moreover, SUPARCO is pursuing its role in environmental monitoring through its partnership with the National Disaster Risk Management Fund (NDRMF) on 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, helping prioritize disaster risk mitigation investments and strengthen Pakistan's capacity to manage natural catastrophes effectively.

Chair,

Training and development of requisite human resources through national efforts and international cooperation is an important part of our strategy to build capacity for effective use of space technologies and applications for sustainable development. Moreover, sustained efforts are undertaken to promote awareness about space among masses, especially youth through space exhibitions, seminars and workshops.

Pakistan is also engaged in robust international collaboration for promoting the peaceful uses of outer space through its membership of several international organisations, bilateral agreements and MoUs, and participation in space-related seminars, conferences and workshops around the world.

Even as more and more actors turn to space, including private sector entities, the space divide – the gap between the advanced space-faring countries and the developing countries with limited or no access to space technologies – not only persists but could also widen. The aspiration to use outer space for progress and prosperity on earth will remain unfulfilled if the issue of space divide remains unaddressed. This august forum must play its due role in addressing this challenge.

On this, Pakistan is regularly organizing international conferences, workshops and trainings 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, Pakistan will host the International Conference on Applications of Space Science and Technology (ICAST) which is scheduled to be held from 18-20 Nov 2025. 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.

Chair,

Pakistan welcomes the establishment of the Action Team on Lunar Activities Consultations (ATLAC) and looks forward to supporting the work of this important body to facilitate an outcome which will be beneficial for all Member States.

Moreover, Pakistan also looks forward to positive deliberations regarding the fourth United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE IV) and will underscore that UNISPACE IV must be an opportunity to put the interests of developing countries front and centre. Moreover, the agenda of this event must ensure that the use and exploration of outer space is carried out exclusively for peaceful purposes for the benefit of all countries, regardless of their degree of scientific and economic development and in line with the body of applicable international law. Pakistan looks forward to a fruitful conclusion to these discussions and remains committed to actively participating in all deliberations regarding UNISPACE IV.

Chair,

Pakistan greatly values the work being carried out by the International Committee on Global Navigation Satellite Systems (ICG) which has contributed to sustainable development by promoting cooperation in matters related satellite-based positioning, navigation and timing. GNSS technologies have become an integral part of our societies and economies. Pakistan recognizes that satellite navigation systems are playing an indispensable role in 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 believes that the ICG is a purely technical body whose work stands to benefit from the participation of countries that have growing GNSS capabilities. 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.

Chair,

Pakistan has been a strong and consistent proponent of the Prevention of Arms Race in Outer Space. We are against the militarization and weaponization of outer space in all its possible manifestations. Space is the common heritage of humankind and all nations must desist from actions which can lead to its militarization. It is disappointing to note that countries are already treating space as a war-fighting domain and building relevant military capabilities.

Similarly, anti-satellite tests, not least because of their debris generating effect, remain a matter of grave concern. We believe that there is a need to address gaps in the international space laws with a view to ensuring that no one threatens peaceful activities and applications of space technologies for socio-economic development. In the absence of strong legal instruments, other states could also follow suit. Pakistan supports all international efforts aimed at strengthening the ways and means of maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes.

Chair,

Lastly, we look forward to a fruitful exchange of views among member states during this important session of the subcommittee.

I thank you

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