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Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space

Unedited transcript

Fifty-fourth session

629th Meeting
Commemorative segment
Wednesday, 1 June 2011, 3 p.m.
Vienna

Chairman: Mr. Dumitru Dorin PRUNARIU *(Romania)*

The meeting was called to order at 3.19 p.m.

The CHAIRMAN Good afternoon Excellencies, distinguished delegates and representatives. I would like to declare open the afternoon's part of the commemorative segment of the fifty-fourth session of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.

I would like to open the floor for addresses by United Nations member States related to the fiftieth anniversary of the Committee and the fiftieth anniversary of human space flight. I kindly draw your attention of the delegations that the addresses are limited to maximum 5 minutes. The list of speakers is made available at the back of the room.

I would like to give the floor to the distinguished representative of Thailand, His Excellency, the Minister of Thailand.

Mr. V. VIRAMETEEKUL (Thailand) Mr. Chairman, Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen.

First of all, on behalf of the Royal Thai Government, allow me to express our appreciation to you and the Secretariat for the positive achievement, under your leadership, during the past years.

Half a decade ago on a Wednesday in April something that mankind had only dreamed of became a reality, man was able to fly into outer space and back. In the very same year came another significant event, the very first meeting of the permanent Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, or COPUOS, was also convened. I am therefore honoured to have the opportunity to celebrate with you today this fiftieth anniversary of human space flight and the fiftieth anniversary of COPUOS. A golden celebration for both the importance of the outer space exploration and our international cooperation.

COPUOS has seen many changes that people in this generation could never have imagined and it has survived and prospered. Through the course of these years, the Committee has provided an important platform for intergovernmental bodies to act and react in the field of space science. The success is clearly reflected in the strong international cooperation that has carried researchers to numerous achievements in technological development and its advanced applications. Member countries have all benefited, humankind has benefited.

Ladies and gentlemen, in order to commemorate the first human space flight there is now an exhibition in Thailand called 'The 50 years since the first human space mission' to educate our public. Creating better understanding of space technology is, and continues to be, important in our society. Thailand has also taken serious steps to ensure full cooperation and effective outcome under the framework of COPUOS since our membership in 2004. This includes our collaboration with UNOOSA in organizing international fora and also our collaboration with regional partners in establishing human development programmes. While we set our eyes outward beyond the new horizon of the new universe, we do not lose

In its resolution 50/27 of 6 December 1995, the General Assembly endorsed the recommendation of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space that, beginning with its thirty-ninth session, the Committee would be provided with unedited transcripts in lieu of verbatim records. This record contains the texts of speeches delivered in English and interpretations of speeches delivered in the other languages as transcribed from taped recordings. The transcripts have not been edited or revised.

Corrections should be submitted to original speeches only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned, within one week of the date of publication, to the Chief, Conference Management Service, Room D0771, United Nations Office at Vienna, P.O. Box 500, A-1400, Vienna, Austria. Corrections will be issued in a consolidated corrigendum.

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sight of the present challenges that occur on our planet and here space technology is proven to be valuable when dealing with global challenges such as flood, drought, landslide and tsunami, many precious lives have been saved.

At the moment Thailand owns and operates an Earth observation satellite. We have shared our resources with our neighbours and partners in the region particularly with regard to our recent disaster emergencies. Within ASEAN we are now talking about an ASEAN Earth observation satellite which would be useful for the early warning system for disaster in South-East Asia. To this end, it is obvious that cooperation is key, regionally and globally. Thailand reaffirms our conviction and stands ready to work together to enhance international cooperation in the peaceful exploration and use of outer space.

In closing, ladies and gentlemen, while we come to celebrate the achievements of COPUOS we must also realize the challenging path that lies ahead of us such as climate change and natural disasters. Thailand is proud to be a part of the COPUOS community and we hope to do more with you in the future. Thank you very much.

The CHAIRMAN I thank the distinguished representative of Thailand for his address.

Now I give the floor to His Excellency, the Minister of Education and Science of Tunisia.

Mr. R. CHAABOUNI (Tunisia) (*interpretation from Arabic*) Chairman, ladies and gentlemen, representatives. I have the pleasure of stating in my own name and on behalf of the Tunisian delegation a great pride in being able to work alongside you at the deliberations of this fifty-fourth session of the Committee and to represent Tunisia as a fully-fledged member of COPUOS. I also have the pleasure, on this occasion, in extending our gratitude to all friendly and fraternal countries that supported Tunisia's candidacy for membership in this Committee after it had attended a number of sessions as an observer.

Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen, delegates. Today we celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the creation of COPUOS and the fiftieth anniversary of the first manned space flight. I would like to take advantage of this opportunity to congratulate all the members of this Committee as well as the Office for Outer Space Affairs and all of those who, for half a century, have contributed very resolutely to promoting international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space, fostering research and the dissemination of information in this vital field while also considering the various legal aspects of relevance. I would also like to express my esteem for the role this Committee has played in ensuring that all States may cooperate in the exploration and research of outer space irrespective of their level of scientific, economic and technological development. This Committee has also catered to the needs of developing countries and countries with emerging space programmes.

We have had the pleasure to see that our membership in this Committee has been accompanied by a radical reform and transformation in Tunisia at the start of this year with a drive for democracy in which our people may attain their objectives through freedom and prosperity while also anchoring the principles of justice and humanity in their lives and this will be part and parcel of our foreign policy and policy of solidarity with all the peoples of the world. We hope that your solid support for our country in all these fields will continue and we reassert the very special interest we have in COPUOS now that we have become members while promising to make every effort to contribute actively and effectively to attainment of the noble principles which COPUOS endeavours to enshrine.

Chairman, ladies and gentlemen. Space is nowadays considered to be an essential concern amongst the developed States and, while observing the Earth and the solar system as well as space in general, we have worked to promote various activities such as satellite telecommunications, Internet browsing and other fields. All of this is part and parcel of the various policies our countries have introduced and on this basis Tunisia has paid special attention to the peaceful use of outer space. We have developed an integrated strategy covering outer space and we have endeavoured to tackle a number of scientific and technological challenges.

I would like to take advantage of this opportunity to address COPUOS and all UN space-related agencies and all States, especially those that have capacity for space exploration as well as international, regional and other specialized agencies. I address to them an appeal to help Tunisia to build up a national space programme in the context of bilateral, regional and multilateral cooperation programmes. In the same context, Tunisia is endeavouring to marshal space technologies domestically in order to develop satellite technology and extend it to cover education, health, food security, education and training.

Mr. Chairman, in concluding, I cannot fail to mention the fact that my country's delegation, over the

next few days, will be presenting more details on the activities already underway and those scheduled for the future with respect to peaceful use of outer space while providing technical information from members of our Committee. Thank you once again for your attention and I wish you every success in the deliberations of this fifty-fourth session of COPUOS. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN I thank His Excellency, the Minister of Education and Science of Tunisia, for his address.

The distinguished representative of China has the floor.

Mr. Q. CHEN (China) (*interpretation from Chinese*) Distinguished Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen. We are here to attend the grand event commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of the UN Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and the fiftieth anniversary of the first human space flight. It is a great occasion for the global space community and, on behalf of China National Space Administration (CNSA), I would like to offer warm congratulations on the convocation of this event. We applaud the leading role that COPUOS has been playing over the past 50 years in promoting the peaceful uses of outer space, advancing the improvement of space legislation and deepening international cooperation exchanged in outer space. We commend the unremitting efforts made by States in space flight and the human courage demonstrated in exploring unchartered waters or space.

Like many countries in the world, the Chinese nation expressed her longing for the deep _____(?) of her civilization. Chinese mythology tells of a beautiful tale of an earthly queen named Ch'ang-O who levitated to the Moon and became the Moon goddess. There was an ancient bureaucrat who, carrying a kite and sitting on a chair propelled by thunder rockets, made a brave attempt to fly skyward.

China's space endeavour began in 1956, since then it has independently established a complete space system with a series of important achievements. We have developed a relatively complete spectrum of launch vehicle models thereby acquiring the capability of sending different types of spacecraft into space. We have developed meteorological, oceanographic resource, communications, navigation and positioning satellite series contributing positively to national economic and social development on many fronts. We have commenced the lunar exploration programme and successfully launched Chang'e-1 and Chang'e-2 lunar probes which obtained a host of scientific data and two dimensional images of the whole Moon. We have successfully performed four unmanned space flight experiments and three manned space flights sending six Chinese astronauts or taikonauts into space thus realizing the Chinese nation's millennia old dream of space flight.

For China's space endeavour the goal has always been the peaceful uses of outer space to promote human social progress. China has always been of the view that outer space is the common asset of all humankind and all countries in the world have equal rights to freely exploit and use outer space. China stands ready to strengthen international exchange and cooperation in the space field to promote space development around the world on the basis of equality, mutual benefit, peaceful uses and common development.

Over the past decades, China has signed international space cooperation agreements, or memoranda of understanding, with many States, space agencies and international organizations, whereby active and effective cooperation in space engineering, satellite application and launch service has been conducted. The China National Space Administration supported UNCOPUOS in the establishment of a UN SPIDER office in Beijing in December 2010 which is set to contribute positively to disaster prevention and reduction in the region.

As a member of the International Charter on Space and Major Disasters, China fulfils its responsibilities and obligations in earnest and offers services of Chinese satellites to the countries that are being hit by major natural disasters such as flood, earthquakes and fires. When China was stricken by major natural disasters, including the earthquakes in Wenchuan and Yushu, we also received timely space technology-based support and services from many friendly countries for which we are deeply grateful and would like to say a note of gratitude on behalf of CNSA.

At this new starting point in history China will comprehensively implement the lunar exploration programme and the manned space flight programme, accelerated development of the BeiDou or Big Dipper Satellite Navigation System and a high resolution Earth Observation System continue to perfect China's launch vehicle spectrum and supporting facilities, enhance our space entry capabilities and actively build national space infrastructure so as to achieve the all-round coordinated and sustainable development of China's space endeavour.

The China National Space Administration is ready to continue strengthening its cooperation with COPUOS, make progress together with our colleagues around the world hand in hand, and do our part for the peaceful uses of outer space and for civilization and progress of humankind. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN I thank the distinguished representative of China for his address.

Now I give the floor to the distinguished representative of the Russian Federation.

Mr. S. SAVELIEV (Russian Federation) (*interpretation from Russian*) Thank you. Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen. After the UN General Assembly adopted, in April of this year, a resolution to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the first manned space flight, that anniversary as well as the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space are being commemorated again today at the Vienna International Centre. It is not a coincidence that the two anniversaries coincide. The manned space flight ushered in a space era and made it clear that the UN needed a forum that would place on its agenda multilateral diplomacy in the new sphere, space exploration.

Colleagues the most important priorities of Russia's space policy at this time are, defending the concept of the exclusively peaceful use of outer space for international security, strengthening mechanisms for a fair and beneficial international cooperation, ensuring effective management, both nationally and internationally, of the technological and other resources associated with space activities. It is impossible today to conceive of solving these tasks without this Committee's multi-faceted activities. It has reached its fiftieth anniversary in good shape with a good understanding of the important trends in the world, a renovated agenda and new objectives to synthesize the diverse interests of States and groups of States in outer space is no easy task. However, the Committee has always been up to it and we hope that it will continue making well-considered competent decisions that launch new initiatives meeting the vital needs of our nations.

For example, the Declaration on International Cooperation in Space Exploration and the Use of Outer Space for the Benefit and in the Interests of All States, adopted in 1996 with a particular attention to the needs of developing countries, should be considered not just a set of recommendations and good wishes but also a very realistic manual of instructions for work. I will explain.

Through developing its own international treaties in outer space activities Russia has been able to accomplish a lot. A special kind of intergovernmental agreements protect space technologies, regulate the export of high technologies based on a set of terms that is unprecedented for the international community. In full conformity with the needs of the international community the concept of controlled products being made available to the end user has become widely accepted. It envisages complete immunity for exported protected technologies in the importer's territory including in commercial activities and protects them from any type of activity that would interfere with their being employed by the end user. This resolves the issue of export controls including those situations where the receiving States are not Parties to existing international regimes such as the Missile Technology Control Regime for example.

As a result, it is possible to solve two tasks. Respect the security needs in terms of protecting controlled high technologies and on the other hand ensure that space cooperation proceeds smoothly as defined by the United Nations. It would be no exaggeration to say that international experience has no precedent of such a pragmatic and effective use for the benefit of States of the principles and norms enshrined in the United Nations Convention on Jurisdictional Immunities of States and Their Property, approved by the General Assembly on 2 December 2004. We believe that the development of an institutional framework for space cooperation should be analysed within the new agenda item on this Committee on the sustainability of space activities for the long term. We hope this work will be productive.

Discussing a number of concepts that go into the sustainability doctrine would require good coordination of our work with the work of government experts on transparency and confidence building measures in outer space being set up on the basis of resolution 65/68 of the General Assembly. We proceed from the understanding that establishing cooperation in this area among various fora, including the Conference on Disarmament, will make it possible in due course to better realize the so far untapped potential in terms of retaining outer space for peaceful purposes.

Mr. Chairman. At present Russia. within the framework of its overall policy to modernize and innovate, is addressing a broad array of issues with a view to ensuring a dynamic growth of Russia's rocket industry and space research. Our innovative plans are

profoundly related to international cooperation and the work of COPUOS. Thank you very much.

The CHAIRMAN I thank the distinguished representative of the Russian Federation for his address.

Now I would like to give the floor to the distinguished representative of the United States of America.

Mr. DAVIS (United States of America) Thank you very much Mr. Chairman and colleagues.

The space age began as a struggle for security and prestige between two competitors the Soviet Union, first in space, and the United States. Today American astronauts, Russian cosmonauts and space farers from dozens of partner nations in Europe, Asia and North America, live and work together on the International Space Station. In the last 50 years in fact men and women from nearly 40 nations have embarked on voyages dedicated to the peaceful exploration of outer space. In the coming years there will be more. That is the great accomplishment of recent history in space, no longer do adversaries compete for primacy in the cosmos, now all mankind collaborates to expand human horizons. We work together to promote peaceful cooperation in space flight, to expand our capacity to operate in Earth orbit and beyond. It is a remarkable accomplishment of which we should all be proud and our success at transforming the nature of our exploration beyond the confines of our planet has reflected a strong steady light of hope and peace back onto the Earth itself. If cooperation in space can upend the superpower competition that began the space age might not other great collaborative ventures result in similar triumphs of the human spirit.

Mr. Chairman, for 50 years the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space has enjoyed great success in stimulating international space cooperation and in bringing the benefits of space exploration to a wide range of people and nations around the globe. Terrestrial navigation, disaster response and mitigation, global search and rescue, weather and climate monitoring, all depend upon space technology and assets as well as the sharing of data from those assets. This Committee has played a vital role in establishing the framework for international cooperation on these matters. The work of COPUOS was critical to the development of the major space treaties that underpin space activities today, this work continues as the Committee adopts new agenda items to address our evolving and expanding use of space into the future. Its success is testimony both to the international coalition that brought it into existence and to the commitment of its member States to its essential mission.

Beyond these practical considerations, human space flight has altered our collective frame of reference. Those who have travelled into space share the privilege of seeing Earth as one world, one ecosystem, humanity's one home, seemingly insignificant against the backdrop of the universe yet uniquely precious. The lesson their experience conveys to us is one of peace and cooperation in space, this Committee's raison d'être.

Mr. Chairman, the fiftieth anniversary of human space flight is a proper occasion to reflect upon humanity's space faring achievements. Over 500 people from all six inhabited continents have flown in space. There have been over 280 human space flight missions, including 9 to the Moon where the footprints of 12 humans linger in the lunar dust, footprints that will last for millions of years. This year marks 30 years of Space Shuttle operations, ferrying crew and cargo to and from space. The International Space Station stands out as the most ambitious international engineering project to date and as the most enduring international space effort. With the assembly of the International Space Station at completion and a full-time crew of six, a new era of utilization for research is beginning, we expect its operations to continue until at least the year 2020. Just last year, the heads of 30 space agencies took the stage together to celebrate the space achievements of all nations, undergoing the ongoing commitment to cooperation in space exploration. It is the unique blend of unified and diversified goals among the world's space faring nations that will lead to improvements of life on Earth for people of all nations.

This is also a proper occasion to renew our commitment to realizing our common aspirations. When we consider just how far we have come, we can imagine what we may achieve 50 years hence on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of COPUOS and of human space flight. Our technology has freed us from the tyranny of gravity, our commitment to international fora such as COPUOS frees us to dream of a boundless future in space for humankind's endeavours, a future free of earthbound rivalry and mistrust.

Mr. Chairman, COPUOS should continue in its role to stimulate international cooperation helping nations work together to develop the technologies we need to take humans beyond Earth orbit and on to other planets. Continued and expanded cooperation in human space exploration means all nations, space faring or not, will find their horizons broadened, their

knowledge enhanced and their lives improved. Thank you Mr. Chairman and colleagues.

The CHAIRMAN I thank the distinguished representative of the United States of America for his address.

Now I would like to give the floor to the distinguished representative of Hungary on behalf of the European Union.

Mr. T. KOVÁCS (Hungary, on behalf of the European Union) Thank you. Mr. Chairman, distinguished delegates, I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The candidate countries, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Turkey and the countries of the stabilization and association process and the potential candidates, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia as well as Armenia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, associate themselves with this statement.

First of all, the EU wishes to express condolences and deepest sympathy to the people and the government of Japan following the devastating earthquake and tsunami only a few months ago.

At the outset, allow me to congratulate you, Mr. Chairman, not only for chairing the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and this high-level segment of this COPUOS session but also for your thirtieth anniversary of your scientific flight in outer space. The EU highly appreciates the hard preparatory work for this high-level meeting and the accompanying exhibition. We express our thanks to the Director of OOSA, Ms. Mazlan Othman and her staff. We are convinced that this exhibition yields a proper cross section of the achievements of space activity in the past decades.

We are very honoured to attend this prestigious event commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of the first human space flight as well as the likewise fiftieth anniversary of the first session of COPUOS as a standing committee of the United Nations.

Yuri Gagarin's space flight was undoubtedly a milestone in human history. Since then, more than 500 people from dozens of countries followed him into outer space. What in the 1960s was a unique and extraordinary event, by now became an almost everyday reality. In the past decade, thanks to the International Space Station, human beings were and are continuously present in outer space. For nearly two decades the human space flight was the privilege of only two nations but then some citizens of the European Union also followed them. The first Europeans flew in outer space through international cooperation and today the European Space Agency coordinates national efforts. The European Astronaut Corps is currently composed of 14 members being trained in the European Astronaut Centre. During the last three decades about 40 Europeans worked for a shorter or longer time on board different space vehicles. Europe is involved as a firm partner in the International Space Station programme and the European Space Agency built its own laboratory attached to the ISS regularly sending cargo ships there and not long ago a European commanded the Station.

Mr. Chairman, distinguished delegates. At this commemorative segment of the COPUOS session in the presence of the distinguished representatives of UN member States, including those States which are not members of the Committee, we also celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of establishing COPUOS as a permanent body of the United Nations. Based on the pioneering work of an Ad Hoc Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space in 1961, the General Assembly stated that the United Nations should provide a focal point for international cooperation in the peaceful exploration and use of outer space and requested the committee to take this responsibility. Now, after half a century, we can affirm that COPUOS has fulfilled the task specified by the General Assembly 50 years ago. The first permanent Committee had only 24 member States, I am proud to say that 11 member States of the today's European Union, including Hungary, were among them and since then it has grown to 70 members making COPUOS as one of the largest committee's of the United Nations and clearly demonstrating the importance of space activity not only for space faring nations but also for developing countries.

In the first two decades of its activity COPUOS laid down a firm legal basis for all forms of space activities namely the five treaties; the Outer Space Treaty, the Rescue Agreement, the Liability Convention, the Registration Convention and the Moon Agreement. It is important to note that the Outer Space Treaty has been ratified, up to now, by more than 100 countries. Additionally, the Committee has also concluded five sets of legal principles which have been adopted by the United Nations General Assembly.

In the past decades, significant changes occurred in the structure and content of space endeavour. New forms of activities, new technologies, new participating entities, increased international cooperation, privatization and commercialization of space activities as well as new problems and threats not

foreseen 50 years ago appeared in the space activity which led COPUOS to develop concepts of the launching State for registration practices, space debris mitigation guidelines and nuclear power source applications in outer space, which have all been endorsed by General Assembly resolutions.

The European Union feels that now it is time to address these new challenges and has a proposal for a new code of conduct for outer space activities. The purpose of the code of conduct would be to enhance the safety, security and sustainability of outer space activities for all. It includes transparency and confidence building measures and reflects a comprehensive approach to safety and security in outer space guided by the following principles: freedom for all to use outer space for peaceful purposes; preservation of the security and integrity of space objects in orbit; new consideration for the legitimate security and defence interests of States. The EU is in the process of consulting with as many countries as possible to this proposal and gathering their views.

Mr. Chairman, distinguished delegates. Of the recent activities of COPUOS we would like to highlight several milestones. As a follow-up to the third UNISPACE conference, the International Committee on GNSS (ICG) has been established to promote the use of GNSS infrastructure on a global basis and to facilitate exchange of information. Also an important follow-up of the UNISPACE III conference was the establishment of the UN SPIDER network in order to ensure that all countries and international and regional organizations have access to all types of space-based information and to develop the capacity to use the full disaster management cycle. Numerous natural disasters occurring in countries all over the globe dramatically show the need for improving the disaster management cycle. The UN SPIDER programme joined the other international main instruments in Earth monitoring such as the Group on Earth Observations (GEO), the Committee on Earth Observation Satellites (CEOS) and the Charter on Cooperation to Achieve the Coordinated Use of Space Facilities in the Event of Natural or Technological Disasters also known as the International Charter Space and Major Disasters. We are confident that current works within COPUOS notably on the theme of the long-term sustainability of space activities and associated legal, economic and political issues will constitute further important achievements and contributions from COPUOS to the general framework of the peaceful uses of outer space.

To conclude my statement, I underline the support of the European Union to the Declaration of this meeting. The European Union expresses its appreciation on the adoption of this unique document by the distinguished delegations. Welcoming once more this commemorative segment of COPUOS on the occasion of the two important anniversaries, we assure you of the support of the EU and wish COPUOS further successes during this session as well as for the future. Thank you for your attention.

The CHAIRMAN I thank the distinguished representative of Hungary on behalf of the European Union for his address.

Now I would like to give the floor to the distinguished representative of Belgium.

Mr. E. BÉKA (Belgium) (*interpretation from French*) Thank you. Mr. Chairman, Madam Director of the Office for Outer Space Affairs, Your Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen.

First of all let me convey the apologies on behalf of Madame Sabine Laruelle, Belgium's Minister for Space Policies, she really wanted to be here with us but a special session of the Council of Ministers made it impossible for her to attend. She asked me to express her great interest in what we are doing here today.

Indeed there are few occasions in the world that are truly universal and can be commemorated as such, the first manned space flight was certainly one of them. For the first time ever our planet revealed itself to the eyes of one of its inhabitants, the cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin. Since then, space exploration has brought multiple wealth, scientific wealth, economic wealth but also, and most importantly perhaps, a new dimension was added to the existence of the human being and the world that we live in.

Today we know that telecommunications are at the mercy of solar flares that life on Earth itself can be fully destroyed by a simple asteroid. These threats encourage us to work together to find alternatives to these risks specifically within COPUOS, without such cooperation we would not be able to protect ourselves from dangers that come from space but if it is possible to do that it should also be possible to work, on a daily basis, towards greater respect for our planet and its resources. All of this is part of the legacy of Yuri Gagarin and what the great pioneering nations have accomplished in space in a little more than 50 years.

Belgium joined these efforts since the early 1960s and significantly contributed to establishing what we now call space faring Europe. Since then my country has become constantly and significantly

involved in space research and the use of space applications for the benefit of humankind. Today we reap and benefit from the fruits of that policy. Each Belgian citizen, on an annual basis, invests about 20 Euros into space research and space civilian technologies. This investment allows my country to take a substantial part in international space programmes such as ExoMars, the International Space Station, European space launches. In addition to these programmes, Belgium supports smaller projects that benefited citizens such as Galileo, GMS launched by the European Union and other small _____(?) but also useful such as the development of PROBA mini-satellites based on Belgian expertise.

Obviously, on a day like today I cannot fail to pay tribute to two individuals in particular, thanks to them on three occasions a citizen of Belgium flew into space. In 1992, Dirk Frimout became the first Belgian astronaut by taking part, as a payload specialist, in mission STS-45 on board the American Space Shuttle Atlantis. In 2002 Frank De Winne, a member of the European Corps of Astronauts of ESA, participated as a flight engineer in the Soyuz flight of the TMA model. That mission was called Odissea and it was largely financed by Belgium. In 2009 Frank De Winne again went into space on board a Soyuz for a mission of six months on board the International Space Station. On that occasion he was the first European to become the onboard commander of the Station. Belgium is proud to have had these two astronauts but also we are thankful to the women and men who everyday in research centres or at factories and other facilities help us to accomplish more than our fair share in space exploration.

Mr. Chairman. My delegation fully associates itself with the statement made by the representative of Hungary on behalf of the European Union.

During our recent presidency of the European Council of Ministers my country has shared, with its EU partners, its commitment to increasing international cooperation in the area of manned flights and the International Space Station. Both the development and exploitation of this Station must serve enriching, scientifically and technologically, the international community in its entirety and also be used in the area of applications outside those directly linked to outer space.

During its presidency, Belgium has also launched the idea of putting in place an international cooperation platform for strategic cooperation at a high level in the field of space exploration. We believe that the exploration and discovery of outer space by human beings should be based on the development of key technologies and mastering these technologies absolutely involves sharing resources among all nations willing to share them. This is a strong message that the Belgian presidency of the European Council of Ministers has conveyed to space faring Europe, including the European Union, the European Space Agency member States and also all of our partners throughout the world.

Mr. Chairman, with this commemoration of the first manned space flight, we also celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. That event obviously was not as spectacular and is not as well known to the public at large as Yuri Gagarin's flight however, it is an important milestone in space history and it has led to the adoption of principles and rules which today still guide us in our activities and in international cooperation in outer space. I would like to reiterate here Belgium's commitment to this forum, its work and its accomplishments. Today, more than ever, we need a forum where States have an opportunity to talk to each other on a regular basis and together develop the political and legal framework for the exploration and peaceful use of outer space for the benefit of all. Thank you very much for your attention.

The CHAIRMAN (*interpretation from French*) Thank you distinguished representative of Belgium for your statement.

(*continued in English*) I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of India.

Mr. S. SHIVAKUMAR (India) _____(?), representatives, heads of space agencies, astronauts and distinguished delegates from member States of the United Nations, ladies and gentlemen. On this very special commemorative occasion on behalf of India, the Indian delegation greets you all and offers rich compliments to all those who have pioneered, _____(?) and sustained activities in peaceful uses of outer space for 50 years.

The human space flight which began 12 April 1961, is a historical _____(?) highly stimulating and an adventurous activity leading to the permanent presence of human beings in space. This indicates mankind's ability, quest for knowledge and adventure, cooperative spirit, spread of knowledge, intelligence and so on. India wishes to pay her respectful homage to those heroes and heroines of the space adventure who laid down their lives for the cause of space. In the years to come they are all indications that this activity will continue with enhanced scope, with larger international

participation and with many new national and regional players.

The 50 glorious years that have gone by signify the spirit of cooperation among UNCOPUOS member States to use and support each other enhancing space for several developmental activities uniformly across all continents. The concern for the preservation of Earth, the Moon and other celestial bodies, the commitment to be borne by the space _____(?), the _____(?) to sustain space activities for a long time even under stressful constraints _____(?) conditions, the common willingness to consider issues of relevance with changing geopolitical conditions, adding a new set of activities and issues on the agenda, the understanding of the importance of cooperation in space activities, the desire to bring the benefits of space to developing countries _____(?) conditions and especially more so during natural calamities to both developing and developed countries and the desire to share, spread and support the advancement of space technology and research to meet the challenges in the areas of global climate change, food security, water, societal needs, education and training, medical care and so on, which _____(?) the entire life cycle of the human being.

India, in a modest way, has contributed to the multifaceted activities of UNCOPUOS and also benefited in building and sustaining its own successful space programme. India not only achieved _____(?) in developing spacecraft, launching and operating them in orbit but also mastered taking the benefits of space technology to _____(?) and society through many successful application programmes addressing various developmental needs. In doing so, India cultivated and maintained successful cooperative relationships with many member countries in all phases of space activities.

To conclude, India gratefully acknowledges the achievement of humankind in space in the last 50 years and the contribution UNCOPUOS for the same. India wishes many more _____(?) for space activities in the next 50 years and hopes we celebrate the 100th anniversary in space. India greets and compliments one and all present in these two glorious events of historic importance and reiterates her unstinting support to all activities of the Committee in the years to come. Thank you all.

The CHAIRMAN I thank the distinguished representative of India for your address.

Now I would like to give the floor to the distinguished representative of Japan.

Mr. T. IKEGAMI (Japan) Mr. Chairman and distinguished delegates. I am delighted to make a statement on behalf of the Japanese delegation at this commemorative segment on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. My name is Tetsuhiko Ikegami, and I serve as the Chair of the Space Activities Commission in _____(?) supervisory organization of JAXA, the Japan Aerospace and Exploration Agency.

Mr. Chairman and distinguished delegates. On behalf of Japan, I would like to extend our congratulations to COPUOS on the momentous occasion of its fiftieth anniversary. I would also like to convey our gratitude to the devoted staff and bureau members, including our Chair Mr. Prunariu, who worked tirelessly in the preparation of this Committee.

I am pleased to be able to be with you today to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of human space flight this year, as well as to express Japan's sincere gratitude to all astronauts for their contributions to humankind, for expanding our sphere of space activities and for inspiring us for five long decades to dream beyond the planet Earth.

Japan's relationship with COPUOS extends back to the Ad Hoc Committee of 1959, when UN Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary for Japan, His Excellency Mr. Matsudaira, had the honour of chairing the Committee. At that time, the Committee organized both the Scientific and Technical and the Legal Subcommittees to address relevant issues. After seven weeks of fruitful discussion, the report of the Ad Hoc Committee was adopted. At that time, Ambassador Matsudaira commended the achievement which would provide a solid foundation for further international cooperation and the 1961 establishment of COPUOS.

Since then, COPUOS has coped adeptly with the changing pace of space activities and has been the sole venue where a wide range of nations and experts may meet, share information, insights and experiences, ensure transparency and promote mutual confidence, thereby seeking common ground on a range of different concerns spanning five decades. The outcome of this effort has led to the enhancement of the use of outer space for peaceful purposes through five space treaties, various principles and guidelines, the development of international co-operation.

Japan has always participated actively in COPUOS activities in addition to steadily promoting peaceful uses of outer space Japan is enhancing international cooperation through the Asia Pacific

Regional Space Agency Forum (APRSAF). In 2008, the Basic Space Law was enacted and Japan is, now more than ever, stepping up peaceful space applications and collaborations. Japan promises to do its utmost to contribute to COPUOS in future endeavours to further promote international cooperation and utilization for peaceful purposes on the basis of stipulations contained within the international agreements and also on the principle of pacifism enshrined in the Constitution of Japan.

I am delighted that, half a century after Ambassador Matsudaira held the honour, the COPUOS Chair of the fifty-fifth session is slated to be Japan's own Dr. Horikawa, technical counsellor of JAXA. Japan is pleased to participate in measures which enhance the use of outer space as one of the global commons and would like to act as an intermediary through which this precious place is passed on to our next generations.

Mr. Chairman and distinguished delegates. This year marks another event, as well as 50 years after the first human space flight that is 30 years after the United States revealed the Shuttle as the new space reusable vehicle and also the completion of the International Space Station. In ISS, Japan has played a huge role in human space development through its operation of the Japanese experimental module Kibo, by conducting various Kibo experiments and through its success with two consecutive launches of the large-scale launch vehicle, H-IIB, which carried supply cargo to the ISS. Last year, Japan decided that it would continue to participate in the ISS programme beyond 2016. With such an extension, Japan would like to contribute to the expansion of human space flight and to open Kibo to use by fellow Asian countries.

By the way, last June, the Japanese Asteroid Explorer, Hayabusa, returned home from the asteroid Itokawa by overcoming a lot of troubles and it succeeded in touchdown and gathering samples on Itokawa. The odyssey excited many Japanese people, young students as well as elderly ladies. This kind of space science activities also support the peaceful use of outer space in particular in inspiring the next generation.

Mr. Chairman and distinguished delegates. As you are all aware, Japan was struck by the great north-eastern Japan earthquake and tsunami on 11 March of this year. This devastating event killed many people and inflicted our country with a terrible wound. We received much support, including satellite imagery, from a lot of countries whose delegates are seated here. I wish to express my sincere gratitude for this heartfelt support and encouragement. This type of aid made us realize how important international cooperation is in the field of space and also how effective satellites images can be in situations like this. With the aid of each country, Japan is entirely devoted to overcoming this difficulty and to the significant goal of reconstruction. I promise here that, in the future, our reconstructed landscape will be visible from outer space and as the wounds of our landscape heal so will the resilient people of Japan. Thank you for your kind attention.

The CHAIRMAN I thank the distinguished representative of Japan for his address.

Now I would like to give the floor to the distinguished representative of Germany.

Mr. R. LUEDEKING (Germany) Thank you Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, distinguished delegates, we are commemorating 50 years of COPUOS and 50 years of human space flight, this is a great occasion to celebrate past missions and to take a look at the nature of future exploration activities.

Missions to explore space, in particular human space flight, have always exerted a particular fascination. They gave rise to the hope that by venturing into space humankind would be able to provide new answers regarding the origin of life, the where from and the where to, and the starting point and destination of human existence. This applied to manned missions from the first flight of Yuri Gagarin to the Apollo 11 mission and today to the International Space Station.

On reviewing the last 50 years it becomes obvious that a paradigm shift has occurred within space, where it was once a symbol of the technology race and the rivalry between opposing systems it is now, in every sense, a part of our everyday lives and an essential instrument for the achievement of economic, scientific, political and social goals and human space flight has become more and more a symbol of peaceful cooperation between nations.

Looking ahead we can state that human space flight efforts will continue to be directed towards the International Space Station for at least another 10 years. The ISS will remain the centrepiece of joint international scientific research.

Mr. Chairman, in our view, future exploration projects too must be measured according to the extent to which they contribute to solving the challenges at the global level. Exploration missions should serve a

clear scientific purpose such as basic research into the origin of the solar system for example. They should focus on projects of high scientific value with great potential for innovation including in non-space domains. In Germany's new space strategy, intelligent autonomous robotic systems are key technologies for the further exploration of space. Extending mankind's reach into space, intelligent robots will change the face of future space activities. Robotic systems will land on planets, moons and asteroids, explore them and bring major advances in our exploration of the solar system.

Mr. Chairman, I hope that today's commemorative event does not only remind us of the fascination of human space flight and the courage and the achievements of its pioneers, it should also provide a boost to the efforts of COPUOS to bring the benefits of space to Earth, to ensure space security and the long-term sustainability of space activities. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN I thank the distinguished representative of Germany for his address.

Now I would like to give the floor to the distinguished representative of Italy.

Mr. E. SAGGESE (Italy) Thank you Mr. Chairman, distinguished delegates, Italy fully endorses the statement made by Hungary on behalf of the European Union.

I wish to address some additional remarks on my national capacity since it is a pleasure and an honour for me to attend this plenary meeting that celebrates the fiftieth anniversary of the first COPUOS session and the fiftieth anniversary of the first human space flight by Yuri Gagarin which I had the privilege to commemorate in Moscow on 12 April.

During these 50 years, the role of UNCOPUOS in space activities has been highly substantial for the broadening of international cooperation and increasing of the space community. Italy was among the first 18 founder members of COPUOS in 1958 when the United Nations General Assembly established the Ad Hoc Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space with the resolution 1348. After 50 years we are deeply satisfied for the long and rich experience developed up to now.

Mr. Chairman, in this 50 years we appreciated the significant and impressive work made by both subcommittees, the Legal and the Scientific and Technical one. In establishing the outer space international legal regime and in supporting the space technological development of countries and in particular of developing countries. We followed the development of the UN Programme on Space Applications, already establishment in 1971, with admiration. We are convinced after the end of the Cold War and the UNISPACE III recommendation in 1999, that the Programme on Space Applications plays a fundamental role in _____(?) development of space process in countries. After 50 years we find new items and subjects in the agenda of COPUOS such as natural disaster monitoring, climate change and environmental monitoring of water, food and Earth security, debris and near-Earth object protection, nuclear power sources, long-term sustainability of outer space activities. All these new items reflect the change of the space international community, the entrance of new actors including the private sector and the necessity to discuss and solve new _____(?) and dramatic problems of humanity.

Mr. Chairman, distinguished delegates. Italy fully supports the Declaration of the fiftieth anniversary of human space flight and the fiftieth anniversary of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space on this commemorative day. _____(?) cornerstone of the Declaration _____(?), an integral part of Italian space policy, is contained in _____(?), ten years Italian space vision issued a few months ago. Among these, the use of space science and technology and their applications to explore the universe and to understand the planetary system, the use of space applications such as satellite communication, Earth observation systems, satellite and navigation technologies, indispensable tools for long-term solutions of all countries and regions of the world. The use of space technology to prevent and manage the global changes such as natural disaster, debris impact, climate change, digital divide, in the benefit of all human kind, the strengthening of international cooperation for peaceful use of outer space by enhancing the capacity of States for economic, social and cultural development.

The Italian Space Agency, since the beginning of its activity in 1988, _____(?) deeply convinced that space is really a chain of development in terms of technology, knowledge, growing of economy and social benefits for local, regional and international community. Mr. Chairman, as the Italian Space Agency is highly involved in the implementation of the following guidelines.

First, exploring our solar system with European international partners. Italy is engaged in bilateral and multilateral agreements in many different scientific missions such as Mars express, Venus,

BepiColombo, Marco Polo, Rosetta with ESA, Cassini, Dawn, Juno, Swift, Mars Reconnaissance Orbiter (MRO), GLAST Fermi, with NASA.

Second, exploring deep space. Italy is involved with ESA cosmic vision 2015-2025, in particular on 16 May last the STS-134 carried on board the International Space Station the Alpha Magnetic Spectrometer, an international project for dark matter study in which Italy is fully involved.

Third, contributing to human presence in outer space. Since 1992 Italian astronauts have been contributing to human exploration of outer space. Franco Malerba first flew with STS-46; Maurizio Cheli, ESA astronaut, flew with STS-75; Umberto Guidoni, the first European astronaut to visit the International Space Station, flew twice in 1994 and 1996. A few weeks ago, two Italian astronauts, Paolo Nespoli and Roberto Vittori worked simultaneously on board the International Space Station. Paulo Nespoli reached the International Space Station with a Soyuz vehicle for a six month long mission and landed 24 May last. Roberto Vittori reached the International Space Station with the Shuttle on 16 May last and they safely landed today after a 16-day mission.

Last year one of the three Italian Multi-Purpose Logistics Module (MPL) reached _____(?) the International Space Station enlarging the volume of the labs, _____(?) in effect has realized more than 50 per cent of the waste _____(?) module of the International Space Station.

The fourth point is developing a satellite system to monitor Earth. In _____(?) attention to the weak environment in which we live, shown by all astronauts, caused us to create the four COSMO SkyMed radar satellites which is the only dual constellation focused on Earth monitoring, disaster prevention and emergency management. Italy is developing a full range of Earth observation capabilities with a complete set of bands in the _____(?) of active radar, X-Band of COSMO SkyMed, C-Band in cooperation with ESA, N-Band in cooperation with Argentina, P-Band at a national level. In different mission technologies like optical and high _____(?) will follow. These activities have led me this year to serve as President of GEOS.

Fifth point. Ensuring access to space. Italy is involved in contributing to the European access to space in coordination with ESA for the development of Ariane and bigger launching vehicles.

Mr. Chairman, in conclusion let me strongly confirm the commitment of Italy in emphasizing the regional _____(?) of space cooperation activities for peaceful uses of space to achieve the goal of the United Nations Millennium Declaration. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN I thank the distinguished representative of Italy for his address.

Now I would like to give the floor to the distinguished representative of Iran.

Mr. H. FAZELI (Islamic Republic of Iran) In the name of God the compassionate the merciful. Excellencies, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen. On behalf of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran and as President of the Iranian Space Agency I would like to extend my congratulations to you on this important unique occasion which gathers all of us here. I would like to express also my appreciation and deep gratitude to all organizers especially all colleagues from UNOOSA and UNOV and participants to this celebration and outstanding exhibition.

We are all here to commemorate the efforts and sacrifices which have been done during the past half a century to enable humankind to reach outer space. Observing the great success of the International Space Station, fruitful cooperation between COPUOS member States and this glorious celebration and along with the exhibition on space technological achievements convey a concrete message to us. The message is, space technology without discrimination can promote mutual and multilateral ties and diminish gaps between nations and States. The peaceful use of outer space can help us to make a better world for the next generation.

Excellencies, distinguished delegates. I would like to inform you that the Iranian Space Agency has initiated intensive _____(?) under a long-term plan aiming at sending man to outer space. Regarding this objective, the Islamic Republic of Iran has performed several sub-orbital launches carrying living species. Also I have the honour to declare that the Iranian Space Agency is among the exhibitors of the International Space Exhibition which will be officially opened to all of us this evening. I hope these events help us to enhance our cooperation in the field of space technology and its applications. Thank you for your attention.

The CHAIRMAN I thank the distinguished representative of Iran for his address.

Now I would like to give the floor to the distinguished representative of Ecuador.

Mr. D. STACEY-MORENO (Ecuador) (*interpretation from Spanish*) Mr. Chairman. First of all my delegation would like to express its solidarity with Japan in the aftermath of the natural disasters that struck that country a few months ago.

Ecuador is glad to be participating in this commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and the first manned space flight. These are landmarks in the history of humankind, they recall to us of the first steps of the inhabitants of this planet who crossed the threshold between this planet and infinity. The cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin, the pioneer who ushered in the space era and the establishment of this Committee both showed the invincible human spirit and the desire to work collectively to reap the multiple benefits of the exploration of outer space for the benefit of the economic, social and scientific development of humankind.

The delegation of Ecuador would like to commend the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs (UNOOSA) for having prepared with such effort and consistency the events of today and the days to come. We believe that while we think about the events that took place half a century ago we should also look at things that will transpire in the five decades to come. This would be the best way to pay tribute to Gagarin and our predecessors who _____(?) the UN General Assembly in New York and created COPUOS. The vision of 1961 still motivates and inspires our work and we hope will benefit the generations that will come after us.

Mr. Chairman. In these years Ecuador has participated and followed with great interest the work of COPUOS and has contributed toward the development of international space law constantly speaking up for the equitable use of the geostationary orbit, a limited natural resources which is at risk of saturation. In this orbit we have always stated, and this is established in legal instruments, one particularly needs to take into account the interests of developing States and those with special geographic situations.

Ecuador is fully committed to the objectives of COPUOS, developed through UNOOSA and member States. In this regard, my country assumed the Pro Tempore Secretariat of the 5th Space Conference of the Americas since July 2006 to November 2010. This function was a great honour for us and we contributed toward considerable advancement of the Latin American and Caribbean region in its space agenda. At the same time we hope that it contributed to greater awareness of the benefits of space technology for fields that are essential to our human economic and social development.

I would like to take this opportunity to once again thank you and OOSA and various entities such as UN SPIDER for the great support given to the 5th Space Conference of the Americas and the international group of experts by organizing seminars, expert visits, technical studies, which has truly contributed to our efforts to make sure that our region makes full use of the benefits offered by space exploration. I believe that on this occasion we should also highlight that, on the regional level in Latin America, Ambassador Raimundo González and Sergio Camacho have made personal contributions toward the development of space policies, contributions that are invaluable.

Throughout the years Ecuador has followed with great interest the work of COPUOS and its contribution toward the development of international space law. We have constantly spoken about the need to establish equitable use of the geostationary orbit.

My delegation would like to recall the Space Conference of the Americas. As of November of last year, the Republic of Mexico has assumed the function of the Pro Tempore Secretariat and has shown exemplary cooperation of the South-South kind. This forum has provided an opportunity for experts to exchange research and focus on such themes as special space legislation, tele-medicine, epidemiology, distance learning, environmental protection, protection of cultural legacy, mitigation of natural disasters and so forth.

To give just a few examples of the multiple effects that this Space Conference of the Americas has had for our country. A few weeks ago in April of this year, in Cuenca, Ecuador, we held a workshop on the application of space technologies for risk management. That was jointly held by Ecuador and Chile and days after that, on the Galapagos Islands, a meeting was held for the protection of the environment using space-based technologies to try and understand better how countries such as mine which, in the recent past, was fairly ignorant of space technologies has been able to make such huge progress in this field. Space technologies and related applications continue being in the focus of our attention and most particularly to promote the equitable and fair use of these limited resources that are shared by all humankind.

Ecuador has firmly embarked on the road of space exploration for peaceful purposes through inter-institutional efforts of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Trade and the Centre for Integrated Development of Natural Resources through Remote Sensing.

In the same way a civil space agency was set up in Ecuador, known as EXA. This is a specialized entity which has deployed efforts and made it possible to send engineer Ronnie Nader, the first Ecuadorian astronaut, into space. He took part in the Pegasus mission. This is the first Ecuadorian satellite project totally designed in our country and the new satellite will be launched in 2012.

We still have a long road ahead of us in terms of space exploration but we are convinced that we have laid a foundation which, based on the geographic position of our country, made it possible for us to make an exceptional contribution towards the peaceful uses of outer space and we look forward to taking part in this commemoration and the space celebration that will take place in the days to come. This is a true celebration of international cooperation, the spirit of humankind which has led us from the first manned space flight through all of these years toward a future that will be better for all of us living on this planet. Thank you very much.

The CHAIRMAN Thank you very much distinguished representative of Ecuador.

Now I would like to give the floor to the distinguished representative of Saudi Arabia.

Mr. M. TARABZOUNI (Saudi Arabia) (*interpretation from Arabic*) In the name of God, the merciful the compassionate. Chairman, Excellencies, the delegation of Saudi Arabia takes pleasure in participating in this happy event, the fiftieth anniversary of the first space flight by Yuri Gagarin as well as the fiftieth anniversary of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. We all welcome this occasion. My delegation hopes that much greater progress will be made by us in this field in order to guarantee safety and security for all States in fighting against poverty, hunger, and in order to strengthen technical, scientific and legal capacity in States safeguarding a secure future on planet Earth.

For 50 years Saudi Arabia has taken close interest in COPUOS. We have attended all of the Scientific and Technical and Legal Subcommittee meetings, firstly as an observer and then as a member and we have certainly benefited from the peaceful applications for space science especially in respect of satellite communications, air navigation and direct communication services. We have also introduced the first digital card thanks to 71 satellite images from the Landsat satellite. We have also established the largest receiver station in the Middle East in order to glean data from five Earth observation and meteorological satellites.

During this major event today, Saudi Arabia is also celebrating the twenty-fifth anniversary of Sultan bin Salman bin Abdul-Aziz Al Saud flight, the first Arab and Muslim astronaut on the Discovery Shuttle. We have always taken close interest in space science and research in our 35 universities and has always earmarked the necessary funds, some $3 billion, for such research in order to produce tangible results. Our scientists have attended all international meetings, they have received gold, silver and bronze medals at them in reward for their innovations. The King Abdulaziz City for Science and Technology has always placed importance on space science and space technologies and applications through its research institutes. We have also established contacts and concluded cooperation agreements with several agencies, ESA, NASA, the Italian Space Agency, as well as Roscosmos from the Russian Federation amongst others.

Ladies and gentlemen, we call on Almighty God to guide us in our steps towards further progress and we will do our level best to construct a more prosperous, a more safe world for our future generations. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN I thank the distinguished representative of Saudi Arabia for his address.

I just want to kindly ask the distinguished representatives who have statements to limit to five minutes. We still have 19 speakers and only one hour and 15 minutes.

Now I would like to give the floor to the distinguished representative of Romania.

Mr. M. PISO (Romania) Mr. Chairman, distinguished delegates, distinguished guests. My country, Romania, had the honour to be one of the founding members of COPUOS. Given some strategic balance needs, Romania became also the first vice-chairman of the Committee and kept this position for more than three decades, until the Cold War ended. During the recent mandate of COPUOS, Romania organized a regional UNISPACE III conference for eastern Europe, then assumed the chairmanship of the

Scientific and Technical Subcommittee during 2004 and 2006. Finally, the Romanian cosmonaut, Dumitru Dorin Prunariu, was elected as the current chairman of the Committee.

I would like to recall that Romania was a country with a tradition in space research. Conrad Haas in Sibiu, Transylvania, in the sixteenth century developed the first three-stage rocket, _____(?) highlight in the nineteenth century augmented orbital dynamics perturbation theory and the pioneer of space flight, Hermann Oberth, was born and has studied in Romania.

During the last 50 years, and clearly motivated by the space era and the first human space flight, Romania began joining the space club. The first space board was established in 1967 and the first experiment on a satellite happened in 1971. Twenty years after the flight of Yuri Gagarin, the first Romanian astronaut and the 103rd in the world, spent one week on the Salyut-6 space station. After the significant political changes in the 90s Romania turned to cooperate with the major space agencies, in particular with the European Space Agency. Presently, Romania is the second country from the former eastern European block that became a member of ESA. After half a century of human space flight we are able to notice that even countries that are not space powers might practically contribute to the space endeavour and they might recall here the example of the member States of the European Space Agency. The globalization of technologies but also the extension of practical needs clearly ensure the possibility for most of the States and industries to become space actors. Within a proper global cooperation framework, all ingredients are ready to provide long-term sustainability for space programmes.

It was interesting to compare the evolution of both human space flight and COPUOS. At its beginning COPUOS was needed to ensure a balance between the two military blocks. Early cosmonauts and astronauts were also part of military programmes. Then, COPUOS devoted mainly to promote space applications to developing countries and at the same time astronauts and cosmonauts programmes were done in cooperation and applications for the benefit of the citizen.

In the next future human space flight will, probably, develop also on a commercial basis and tourists will be provided on the low-Earth orbit. However, new astronauts will be definitely trained to fly to other planets or to defend Earth by possible asteroid deflection missions. At the same time, the role of COPUOS will move again to global security. Space systems prove to be essential for planetary defence, either for disaster management or space security or to protect Earth from cosmic threats.

It is not very common to have the honour to address greetings to an organization which denoted the almost perfect stability during the last 50 years. I wish to congratulate all the participants for the anniversary of 50 years of real human evolution. Thank you for your attention.

The CHAIRMAN I thank the distinguished representative of Romania for his address.

Now I would like to give the floor to the distinguished representative of France.

Ms. F. MANGIN (France) (*interpretation from French*) Chairman, ladies and gentlemen, Ministers, Your Excellencies, distinguished colleagues. May I begin by expressing to you, on behalf of our delegation, our warmest congratulations on the way in which you are guiding the deliberations of this Committee and this commemorative segment while also congratulating you on the thirtieth anniversary of your space flight. France is delighted to see you placing your great experience and direct knowledge of space exploration, as a former cosmonaut and director of the Romanian Space Agency, at the service of this Committee. We would also like to laud all of the preparatory work carried out by OOSA to organize and hold not only this commemorative segment but also the wonderful exhibition to be inaugurated in due course in the Rotunda. France wholeheartedly endorses the speech made by Hungary on behalf of the European Union and would like to add a few comments in its national capacity.

We are delighted today to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the historic flight of Yuri Gagarin which marked the start of a new era. In this adventure which was technical, scientific and of course human all at once but also in this dream France has played its own role. Ever since 1982 nine French astronauts have flown in space. This was made possible, and indeed made possible for other Europeans, thanks to the cooperation with the Soviet Union and then the Russian Federation and of course with the United States. For some 10 years our astronauts have been part of the European Space Agency's Astronaut Corps which currently comprises three Frenchmen, two of whom have already flown in space.

Today we are also marking the fiftieth anniversary of COPUOS. France, which was one of the

18 founder member States, wishes to reassert its profound commitment to the Committee and the deliberations undertaken in it. This Committee plays an irreplaceable role in developing space law and promoting the development of space applications. The ever growing number of States that are members of it, or who wish to become members of it, bears witness to the major place it occupies. France would also like to avail itself of this opportunity to hail the substantial work carried out by OOSA not only at meetings of the Committee and its subcommittees but also unstintingly in following up decisions of the Committee and the many resolutions of the UN General Assembly.

Given the continuous development in space applications, the Committee must now face new challenges engendered by the success of this space adventure. Amongst them I would of course mention the need to collectively guarantee long-term viability of space activities. For its part, my country is ready fully to contribute to ensuring that the Committee, with its wealth of experience, is in a position to rise to these new challenges and to tackle them in the interests of the international community.

Chairman, Excellencies, colleagues. May I lastly highlight another fiftieth anniversary. That is the fiftieth anniversary of the National Space Studies Centre (CNES) set up in 1961. French political leaders, very early on, acknowledged the importance and challenges in space and wished to endow the country with our own capacity for access to space for developing observation and telecommunication satellites and to establish international cooperation. As early as 1965 this vision was realized with the launch of the Diamant rocket and the placing into orbit of the Astérix satellite. I would invite you to come in numbers to the CNES stand at the exhibition which illustrates the contribution of France to the space adventure.

In the context of cooperation with the educational world to which the Committee and OOSA are especially committed, the CNES stand also includes work carried out by pupils at the Lycée Français in Vienna. Is there a better way of illustrating that the space dream is still alive and that future generations are ready to take on the baton. Thank you very much.

The CHAIRMAN (*interpretation from French*) Thank you for your statement and congratulations.

(*continued in English*) I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of Austria.

Mr. W. WALDNER (Austria) Mr. Chairman, Excellencies, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen. It is an honour and pleasure for me to be with you today and to convey to you Austria's best wishes on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of human space flight and the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.

Austria's relation to COPUOS has been close and substantial since its establishment. In light of the active role Austria has been seeking to play in the United Nations since becoming a member of the organization in 1955, Austria was entrusted to Chair the new permanent Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space in 1961. For us, this was a sign of trust and recognition of our firm commitment to dialogue and cooperation. Amidst high international tensions between the major space powers of that time, Austria remained dedicated to carry the principles of peaceful co-existence to the new spheres of outer space. Ever since, Austria supported COPUOS in its mission to bring the benefits of space down to Earth. To underpin Austria's role as an active player and an honest broker within COPUOS, I would like to highlight not only Austria's chairmanship of COPUOS for 35 years but also the three UNISPACE conferences held in Vienna in 1968, 1982 and 1999. These three conferences extended the scope of COPUOS in providing benefits of space applications and space exploration to a growing number of nations in particular developing countries.

Ladies and gentlemen, as one of the headquarters of the United Nations, Vienna serves as a dynamic hub for the promotion of peace, security and sustainable development. Austria is particularly proud to host the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs which found its new home at the Vienna International Centre in 1993. I am fully aware of the important task UNOOSA has to fulfil in promoting international cooperation in outer space. Let me take this opportunity to extend my warmest thanks to the Director of UNOOSA, Ms. Mazlan Othman and her dedicated team for their hard work, leadership and enthusiasm.

Ladies and gentlemen, Austria strongly believes in the potential and in the benefits of technology for the peaceful uses of outer space. Space science and its applications play an important and growing role in fostering sustainable solutions to global issues such as climate change and disaster management. Against this background, Austria strongly supported the establishment of UN SPIDER, the United Nations Platform for Space-based

Information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response in 2006. UN SPIDER's mission is to ensure that all countries and international and regional organizations have access to and develop the capacity to use all types of space-based information to support the full disaster management cycle.

Austria's contribution to UN SPIDER is focused around four key areas. Technical advisory support in particular to small island developing States; capacity building initiatives; workshops and outreach activities including international workshops in Vienna and regional workshops for Africa, Latin America, the Caribbean and Asia and the Pacific; and, provision of experts to UN SPIDER. We are fully convinced of the added value UN SPIDER provides to communities at risk, as has been the case in the event of the devastating earthquakes in Haiti and Japan as well as the flooding in Pakistan. I would therefore like to encourage other member States to make means available for UN SPIDER, including financial contributions.

Ladies and gentlemen, Austria believes that space technology should be accessible to all countries. As a major Austrian contribution to the United Nations Programme on Space Applications, the traditional Graz symposia have proven to be an excellent platform for exchange between developing and developed countries. The current three-year series of the symposium is dedicated to the topic of capacity building in space technology development with a focus on nano and small satellites and space technology education. There is growing consensus that small satellite programmes are useful tools in transforming developing countries gradually from passive consumers of space technology into active partners. The third and final symposium of the current series will take place from 13-16 September this year in Graz.

Ladies and gentlemen, as the single UN body dealing with international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space COPUOS deserves our continued support. The ongoing festivities and events on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of human space flight and of COPUOS clearly remind us of the leading role the Committee continues to play in our common endeavour to bring the benefits of space to Earth.

In this context, I would like to draw your attention to the human space flight exhibition at the Rotunda of the Vienna International Centre. Likewise, I would like to invite you to the astronauts panel entitled 'The future of humankind in space' which will be held in cooperation with the city of Vienna at the City Hall of Vienna, tomorrow evening. This panel will touch upon the key issues in human space flight and will be co-chaired by Takao Doi, the expert on space applications of UNOOSA and a Japanese astronaut, and the Austrian astronaut, Franz Viehböck.

In conclusion, let me reaffirm Austria's full commitment to the United Nations space activities. Rest assured that Austria's engagement and dedication to COPUOS and UNOOSA will be a lasting one. Thank you very much for your attention.

The CHAIRMAN I thank the distinguished representative of the host country of our Committee, His Excellency Wolfgang Waldner, State Secretary for European and International Affairs of the Republic of Austria, for his statement.

Now I would like to give the floor to the distinguished representative of the Holy See.

Rev. M. BANACH (Holy See) Thank you Mr. Chairman, allow me to cordially congratulate the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space on the occasion their dual track fiftieth anniversary celebrations. Over the years the gaze of this Committee has been directed at the heavens not only in order to study and contemplate the stars created by God but also in order to speak of space probes, space stations and satellites made by men. The Holy See sincerely appreciates all the achievements of this Committee in securing the peaceful uses of outer space.

Might this be what Pope Benedict had in mind during his recent conversation with the Space Station crew? His Holiness observed, and I quote here from the transcript, 'From the Space Station you have a different view of Earth, you fly over different continents and nations several times a day, I think it must be obvious to you how we all live together on one Earth and how absurd it is that we fight and kill each other'. The Pope then asked the astronauts 'When you are contemplating the Earth from up there, do you ever wonder about the way nations and people live together down here or about how science can contribute to the cause of peace?'. The response of astronaut Mark Kelly is remarkable and again I quote from the transcript 'We fly over most of the world and you don't see borders but at the same time we realize that people fight with each other and there is a lot of violence in the world and it is interesting in space. On Earth people often fight for energy, in space we use solar power and we have fuel cells on the Space Station. You know, the science and the technology that we put into the Space Station to develop a solar power capability gives us pretty much an unlimited amount of energy and if these technologies could be adapted more on Earth we could possibly reduce some of that violence.'

Mr. Chairman, precisely what the intention of contributing to reducing violence and to promoting the shared responsibility we all have not only towards our planet but also for all humanity especially the poor and future generations. Pope Benedict XVI chose for his message for the World Day of Peace 2010 the theme 'If you want to cultivate peace, protect creation'. He stated that creation should be protected through a better internationally coordinated management of Earth's resources, this reflection extends also to space. The various modes of man's presence in space lead us to ask a question 'to whom does space belong?' The Holy See maintains that space belongs to the whole of humanity, that it is something for the benefit of all. Just as the Earth is for the benefit of all and private property must be distributed in such a way that every human being is given a proper share in the goods of the Earth, in the same way the occupation of space by satellites and other instruments must be regulated by just agreements and international pacts that will enable the whole human family to enjoy and then use it. This has been one of the achievements of COPUOS over the past 50 years.

Properly understood, modern space technology also provides observations useful for the cultivation of Earth to the use of satellites as possible, inter alia, to obtain exact data regarding the condition of tracts of land, the flow of water and weather conditions. In fact, in that 2010 message for the World Day of Peace, the Pope pointed out that greater attention should be paid to the worldwide problem of water and the global water cycle system which is of prime importance for life on Earth and whose stability could be seriously jeopardized by climate change. COPUOS also contributes actively to this discussion.

In one of the biggest tasks that can be carried out by the use of satellites is the elimination of illiteracy. In fact, satellites can also be used for a wider spreading of culture in all countries of the world not only in those where illiteracy has been already eliminated but also in those where many can still not yet read or write. For culture can be spread with the use of pictures alone but the transmission of culture must not be identified with the imposition of cultures of the technologically advanced countries on those still developing. In fact, in this context, the activities of COPUOS aimed toward the long-term sustainability of outer space acquire an ever greater importance. Emerging nations are concerned that such efforts should not be used to erect barriers to their ability to access space benefits and advanced space nations are concerned that such measures should not limit their freedom of action in space nor impose unacceptable burdens to their economic or industrial competitiveness.

The Holy See is confident that this Committee will be able to elaborate guidelines and recommendations satisfactory for both developing and industrialized countries with a view to promoting a real and effective international cooperation aimed at achieving authentic progress in space and peace in the world. The space environment should be preserved as the common heritage of mankind. We always have to keep in mind our stewardship of God's creation and the responsibility to preserve it for future generations.

So allow me to conclude by stating that, for these reasons, in the future the delegation of the Holy See will also continue to observe the deliberations of this important Committee with great interest. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN I thank the distinguished representative of the Holy See for his statement.

The next speaker is the distinguished representative of Turkey.

Mr. T. OZALP (Turkey) Thank you Mr. Chairperson. Distinguished delegates and representatives, ladies and gentlemen. On behalf of the Government of Turkey, and the Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey (TÜBİTAK), it is our great pleasure and great honour to take part in this historic event and celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of human space flight and the fiftieth anniversary of the UNCOPUOS. I would like to convey my sincere gratitude to UNOOSA and all those who contributed to the success of this special event.

Fifty years ago, Yuri Gagarin opened a window into space for mankind becoming the first humankind in orbit around the Earth. In the last 50 years, and especially with the new century, the importance attached to space by many countries has been dramatically increased and more than 50 governmental space organizations have been established. Space was a dream and now it became a reality.

Ladies and gentlemen. Today space has become a new and economic field as well as a problem solving area which is rapidly contributing to the financial welfare and progress of countries. Space technologies play a key role in accelerating the development processes of countries and increasing the quality of life and security of societies. In recent years, there has been an acceleration in space activities

around the world. Space is not just a tool for better understanding of the universe but also it has become a fundamental sector where the development policies of countries are implemented and new frontiers are opened for the future economic and social welfare of humanity. The effectiveness of space activities of countries usually depend on their degree of human resources development and the budget they allocate to space science and technology.

Space applications play significant role in areas such as energy, water, medicine, education, agriculture, security, and they become an indispensable tool for sustainable development and progress. Actually it is becoming a friend, helping us to address today's most challenging areas and urgent problems such as climate change, disaster management, water, food and energy related issues. Space is not far from us now, it has been better understood, utilized and become an essential element in our ordinary life. In other words, space is the meaning of civilization and an important tool to protect and to improve it.

Most of the countries, in particular space faring ones and the emerging powers, devote major resources to their space activities. The importance of improving and developing international cooperation in the field of space science, technology and applications as well as the peaceful use of outer space has been widely acknowledged. In that context, the contributions of emerging countries, along with space faring ones, have proved to be instrumental in achieving sustainable solutions to our common challenges in the field of space.

Mr. Chairperson, distinguished delegates. We are at a critical juncture in our history in terms of opportunities in space activities. You may wonder why Turkey would like to be a player in space. The answer is very clear, we have the enthusiasm, ambition, motivation, potential endeavours and, most importantly, high level political will and the scientific research, technical and industrial capabilities at a high standard to develop space science and technology and to contribute to international space activities.

Turkey entered the twenty-first century with increasing efforts towards rapid economic and technological development, social change and renewal of its infrastructure. Naturally this process places a heavy load on the current system and it affects every section of the society. Turkey needs to get involved in new areas in order to sustain its development progress and to minimize such effects. One of these new areas is space, which is a strategic choice for the future of Turkey.

Space activities in Turkey were first placed on the government's agenda in the 1990s. In the 2000s, a new chapter in Turkish space activities opened owing to the endeavours of TÜBİTAK. The Turkish Supreme Council for Science and Technology, which is a body under the Prime Ministry, took a major decision on 8 September 2004 when it accepted the need to raise the percentage of R&D and identified space research as a privileged area. The first National Space Research Programme, adopted on 10 March 2005, was prepared entirely by Turkish space stakeholders and by considering the specific capability, capacity, infrastructure and culture of the country. This programme demonstrates the determination of the Turkey to pursue space activities and to invest in its people and future. The programme was set to continue over 10 years. The main goal of this programme is to establish a space R&D infrastructure and to create the necessary national mechanisms to maintain it. Since then we have mobilized our efforts, both internally and externally, in the area of space especially in the last five years. In line with the National Space Research Programme, the efforts to further space research in our country have been accelerated. TÜBİTAK is coordinating this programme together with other space stakeholders and will be responsible for its implementation. In the last five years this programme adopted around 450 R&D projects proposed by Turkish organizations, costing in the region of US$500 million.

There are two projects at this stage worth mentioning, namely, RASAT and Göktürk-2 satellite projects. RASAT, having a high-resolution optical imaging system and new modules developed by Turkish engineers, will be the first Earth observation satellite to be designed and manufactured in Turkey. Göktürk-2 project, on the other hand, is the first step in the formation of a facility, equipment and personnel infrastructure and in meeting the future satellite requirements locally. You could find information on these projects at our stand in the space exhibition area.

In parallel, we also give special importance to human resources development. We have created a special scholarship programme in 2008 for young Turkish students who want to have their Masters and Ph.D. studies about space technologies in critical fields. The programme aims to meet the long-term expert and researcher needs of Turkey.

Mr. Chairperson, distinguished delegates. Nowadays, the scientific and technological activities are more and more conducted at the global level. In this regard every effort, at national level, should be met with adequate international cooperation to be more

effective and meaningful. Thus we have also intensified our efforts at the international level. To this end, we have acquired membership status at international organizations like GEO, EURISY, International Astronautical Federation, UNESCO, CEOS. We have signed cooperation agreements with strategic organizations at national and international level like Roscosmos, ESA, APSCO and further intensified our relations with our year-long partners like the United Nations. We have been actively participating in the UNCOPUOS Committee and subcommittee meetings. Furthermore, last year, we hosted the United Nations/Turkey/ESA Workshop on Space Technology Applications for Socio-Economic Benefits which was a great platform for international collaboration.

One last note for participants. The GEO VIII plenary meeting will be held from 15-17 November 2011 in Istanbul, Turkey. TÜBİTAK is the host organization for this event. We would like to welcome you to participate in it.

Mr. Chairperson, distinguished delegates. One of the key mottos of Turkey's foreign policy is, peace at home, peace in the world. Now we want to carry this one step further, peace at home, peace in the world and peace in outer space. We firmly believe that UNCOPUOS, through its 50 years of existence, has truly contributed to this noble aim and will continue to do so in the future. Before closing my speech, I would like to reiterate how pleased and honoured we are by sharing this historic moment with you. I once again commend UNOOSA for its tireless efforts to organize this event. Thank you for your kind attention.

The CHAIRMAN I thank the distinguished representative of Turkey for his statement.

I just draw your attention distinguished delegates that, during the next days, we have general exchange of views and everything that is connected with that segment please take off from your statement because really we do not have time for all delegates now. Please address only the fiftieth anniversary of the space flight and of COPUOS.

The next delegate on my list is the distinguished representative of Pakistan who has the floor.

Mr. K. ANWAR (Pakistan) Mr. Chairman, my delegation feels honoured to be part of this august gathering commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of human space flight as well as of the UN Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. We express our sincere appreciation for the excellent arrangements that the UN Office for Outer Space Affairs has made for this historic event. It is indeed an event that merits being observed in a befitting manner.

Mr. Chairman, we remember with great respect, with great admiration, those distinguished astronauts, scientists and engineers who built a virtual bridge across space. They helped realize a long-cherished dream of humanity, they opened a whole new world to us, a world of greater knowledge, of deeper understanding, of wider awareness of the universe. The International Space Station is indeed a powerful manifestation of human enterprise, it is an important milestone in cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space.

Mr. Chairman, the Declaration we adopted this morning is a landmark document. It encapsulates our shared ambition to press ahead and explore new frontiers for the benefit of all mankind. Space science and technology provide very useful, very effective, tools for sustainable development, these can significantly improve our lives, these can conserve and help develop natural resources, these are goals perfectly achievable indeed much more can be achieved through continued close cooperation.

Mr. Chairman, the Committee of the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space has a role central to maintaining outer space as the common heritage of mankind. It has played this role with great distinction, it has helped promote peaceful uses of this shared wealth, it has fostered international cooperation, it has encouraged developing countries to benefit from space-based assets and their useful applications. Also the Committee has helped improve space legislation. It has developed five, very important treaties and as many key principles governing the peaceful uses of outer space. We value these achievements, we commend the Committee for this good performance.

Mr. Chairman, Pakistan has been a permanent member of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space since 1973. We have signed and ratified all its five treaties, we have been participating in all its events and activities and Pakistan applications of space-based assets are widely used and in diverse areas of agriculture and forestry, environmental monitoring and water resource management, disaster monitoring and mitigation. We have also been active in implementing the UNISPACE III recommendations. We have established a regional support office of UN SPIDER programme at Karachi.

Mr. Chairman, Pakistan acknowledges and with great appreciation the many benefits that we have drawn from the UN Programme on Space Applications, our scientists regularly participate in workshops, expert group meetings and fellowships under the UN Office for Outer Space Affairs. Particularly useful for my country have been the space weather initiators, the remote sensing applications and image processing as of course space-based disaster management mitigation and capacity building in space law. We are launching the first Pakistan owned and operated communication satellite this year, it will contribute to bridging the digital divide, it would afford us fresh opportunities in mass communication in literacy and in health services.

Mr. Chairman, we are a developing country, we have genuine needs for technical assistance to be able to effectively pursue our space programmes. We have enhanced our capabilities, we have to strengthen our institutions, we have to develop the relevant expertise, all this requires transfer of technology which the Committee can facilitate. We look to it for help and trust that it will meet our expectations.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, outer space is the common heritage of mankind, it must remain so. It should not form part of any military doctrine, no constraints must limit the peaceful uses of outer space, nothing must narrow its scope nor impede its progress, prevention of arms race in outer space should continue to be dealt with by the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva but the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space has a closely related function, it should maintain an active working relationship with CD and we must all support it. I thank you Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN I thank the distinguished representative of Pakistan for his statement.

I would like to give the floor now to the distinguished representative of Ukraine.

Mr. Y. ALEKSEYEV (Ukraine) (*interpretation from Russian*) Ladies and gentlemen, let me say a few words about an event which took place 50 years ago and to which our meeting is devoted. When Yuri Alekseyevich Gagarin flew into space on 12 April 1961 I was a 12-year old schoolboy and I well recall that sunny Spring day. For us, the kids born in Dnipropetrovsk, there was really no alternative to dedicating ourselves to rockets and space all the more so since the design bureau and plant were already operating and the Dnipropetrovsk Physical Technical Institute was training specialists in this field.

We should recall the words of the contemporary writer and journalist Vladimir Gubarev in his book _____(?) he said, Gagarin epitomizes all who made the twentieth century the century of space and rockets. Hundreds of years may pass, much will be forgotten in the collective memory, States and their rulers will disappear in the memory of our descendants, social systems, dates of tragedies, the names of despots may become muddled but Yuri Gagarin, as something transcendent, will remain forever and with him those who elevated him to the peak of the space pyramid.

This great half century, the latter half of the twentieth century, is one we equate with a scientific and technological revolution in science and industry. It was the time of revolutionary change in our country, the first Earth satellite, the flight of Gagarin, US astronauts Moon landing, all are the triumph of revolutionary technology and all of this was linked to the fact that there was a confrontation between two systems spurring on a wish not to lag behind each other, indeed the two were mutually interrelated.

For more than five decades Ukrainian scientists, designers and rocket builders were involved in virtually all the most important space events from the first flights into space, interplanetary missions, to modern-day launches of space vessels and satellite launches. This is a very expensive undertaking and therefore, in this sphere, all countries undertaking this work endeavour to integrate their efforts and possibilities. Ukraine takes an active part in international cooperation with space States and those aspiring to become space States. We have to bear in mind that many of these projects are sustainable and promising. We also need to develop the scientific and technical potential in order to resolve new space tasks. Our country evidently belongs to the space States of the world not only in formal characteristics of its space potential but also its proven ability practically to implement modern space projects. I would like to point out one fact that is worthy of note.

The joint projects developed over the last few decades have become viable and enjoyed international recognition. I would like to highlight the programme to recycle the RS-20 Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles which have been decommissioned and used for launching near-Earth orbit of space vessels. This is a sensible use of such hardware and this year on 20 October we mark the centenary of the birth of the scientist and thinker of Ukraine, Mikhail Yangel, the creator and first head of the Design Bureau Yuzhnoe. In the nerve-wracking years of the Cold War he would create unsurpassed samples of rocket and space technology. A whole galaxy of talented engineers and

designers grew up under his wing. This was a team able to resolve the most complex and unlikely projects in creating the most awesome and destructive modern weapons. Yangel sensed an enormous responsibility towards the world and his contemporaries. He was a philosopher as a _____(?) citizen was fully subordinated to his scientist duty and moral choices and perhaps the fact that there was no nuclear catastrophe and States sat around the negotiating table was precisely because of his responsibility for the state of human beings.

As in previous years success in the space rocket field is painstaking work to identify priorities. The work of many teams and specialists working on the fringes of the unknown this may take years to achieve the desired result. It is a path which is complex and sometimes dangerous but it is rewarded with unprecedented progress for all human endeavours. Therefore space faring cannot be a routine or anodyne matter, we need incredible projects and missions which take ones breath away especially amongst gifted and energetic youth who should be itching to take part in such work. Let us wish them every success, this new generation of researchers and conquerors of space on this journey. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN (*interpretation from Russian*) Thank you for your report.

(*continued in English*) I would like to give the floor now to the distinguished representative of Kazakhstan, cosmonaut Talgat Mussabaev.

Mr. T. MUSSABAEV (Kazakhstan) Mr. Chairman, my colleague and friend Mr. Dumitru Prunariu, distinguished delegates. On behalf of the delegation of the Republic of Kazakhstan allow me to congratulate everyone present here today on the occasion of two landmark dates, the fiftieth anniversary of the first human space flight and the fiftieth anniversary of the first session of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. This event, which took place in 1961, holds an important historical significance and marked humankind's entry into an era of space exploration. On 12 April 1961 Yuri Gagarin, first astronaut and citizen of the Soviet Union, took off in the Vostok spacecraft from the Baikonur launch facility or cosmodrome that was created in 1955 in the vast Kazakh steppes.

Today the Baikonur Cosmodrome, which is now located in the territory of the Republic of Kazakhstan, remains the world's largest space launch facility operating in the interests of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Russian Federation and the international community. To date, more than 140 manned space flights have taken off from the Baikonur Cosmodrome and more 1,500 spacecraft have been launched. In the 50 years of its existence, the manned space programme has reached considerable successes and has contributed greatly to the advancement of science engineering and technology.

The Republic of Kazakhstan has also successfully implemented four national space research and experimental programmes which were accomplished in the following years. In 1991 by the Kazakh astronaut Toktar Aubakirov aboard the Mir Space Station. In 1994, 1998 and 2001, respectively, during space flight missions conducted by Talgat Mussabaev aboard the Mir Space Station and the International Space Station. In particular, during my mission on the International Space Station in 2001, I had facilitated the flight of the world's first space tourist which stands testament to the high level of development reached by manned space exploration. The existence of the unique Baikonur Cosmodrome in Kazakhstan, coupled with its scientific and technical potential, served as a foundation for the development of the national space programme of the country.

At present the Republic of Kazakhstan, which will be celebrating the twentieth anniversary of its independence this year, plans to establish its national space industry namely by completion of the following. Launching a national satellite communication and broadcasting system, KazSat. In July 2011 Kazakhstan will launch their communication and broadcasting satellite, KazSat-2, and preparations have already begun on developing the KazSat-3 satellite.

Creating a national space system for satellite-based remote sensing of Earth's surface comprised of a spacecraft with high and medium resolution images. Building a spacecraft assembly and test bed installation in Astana, the new capital of Kazakhstan, this will be a modern high-tech enterprise designed for building and testing spacecraft components and payload elements used in space system engineering. Installing a space missile system called Baiterek, based on the Russian Angara space launch vehicles, at the Baikonur Cosmodrome. These missiles are designed to provide lifting capabilities for space launch vehicles of various purposes within the framework of the Kazakh and Russian space programmes as well as international commercial projects. Performing research and development work in the fields of astrophysics, physics and solar/terrestrial relationship at the _____(?) test sites located near Almaty, the old capital of Kazakhstan _____(?) professional personnel qualified in space science and technology. This year drafting

work on the law of space activities of the Republic of Kazakhstan will be completed. Provisions are based on the norms of international space law and the established mechanism for regulating and developing space activities in the country.

Kazakhstan has been actively developing its international cooperation in order to effectively address issues related to the creation of its space industry. At present, Kazakhstan has established partnerships and signed international agreements on cooperation in the exploration and peaceful uses of outer space with countries such as Russia, Ukraine, France, Israel, Germany, Japan, India, China and the Republic of Korea. Similar agreements are being prepared for signature with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and several other countries. Kazakhstan has been expanding its cooperation with the following international organizations, COPUOS, the Asia Pacific Regional Space Agency Forum and various international committees for the implementation of global satellite monitoring programmes and projects among others.

In 1997, the Republic of Kazakhstan has ratified all five multilateral treaties adopted by the United Nations. Having been a member of COPUOS since 1994, Kazakhstan has fully supported the Committee's efforts to address major international issues related to the exploration and the use of outer space. Over the 50 years of its existence the Committee has contributed greatly to regulating the space activities of States on the basis of international law and exclusively for peaceful purposes.

Today's agenda for the Committee and its subcommittees contains extremely important issues concerning space debris. The use of the geostationary orbit, the delimitation of outer space, the use of nuclear power sources in outer space and other subjects. We consider it necessary to further strengthen and enhance the scope of the Committee with a view to developing more efficient and effective mechanisms for international regulation of outer space activities and ensuring equal access to outer space and the use of research results for the benefit of all States, irrespective of their economic or scientific level of development. Thank you for your attention.

The CHAIRMAN I thank the distinguished representative of Kazakhstan for his statement.

Now I would like to give the floor to the distinguished representative of Slovakia.

Mr. J. LAPIN (Slovakia) I am honoured to have this unique possibility to deliver the national statement on behalf of the Slovak delegation. Slovakia highly appreciates the hard and well done preparatory work for this commemorative segment. Slovakia expresses thanks to the Director of OOSA, Ms. Mazlan Othman, and her staff. We are convinced that this exhibition yields a proper cross section of the achievement of space activity in the past decades. Furthermore, the Slovak Republic fully associates itself with the statement of the European Union, delivered by Mr. Tamás Kovács of the Hungarian delegation on behalf of the European Union.

Mr. Chairman, dear Mr. Dorin Prunariu, allow me as well to congratulate you not only for chairing the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and this high-level segment of COPUOS session but also for your private thirtieth anniversary of your scientific flight in outer space.

This space flight of Yuri Gagarin was definitely a milestone in human history. Since then more than 500 people of countries all over the world followed him in outer space. Slovakia is very proud to be part of and to have a representative in Colonel Ivan Bella of Soyuz TM-29 in 1999.

Mr. Chairman, distinguished delegates. In the first two decades of its activity COPUOS laid down a firm legal basis for all forms of space activities namely the five treaties as well as five sets of legal principles which have been adopted by the United Nations General Assembly. Slovakia is more than confident that current works within COPUOS notably on the theme of the long term sustainability of space activities and associated legal, economic and political issues, will constitute further important achievements and contributions from COPUOS to the general framework of the peaceful uses of outer space.

Mr. Chairman, dear delegates. During the International Geophysical Year in 1957, Slovakia began the measuremenst of cosmic rays in the High Tatra mountains. A long time before the space era, the measurements of Earth's magnetic field in Hurbanovo and of solar corona at Lomnický štít have started. After the launch of the first Sputnik in 1957 the measurements on the ground were substantially upgraded by the possibilities of observations of processes direct in space. In the 1970s, Slovakia started research of space on satellites especially in two directions namely, in space physics and in life sciences.

In space physics, geophysics and astronomy, the first experiments on low altitude satellite IK-3 was

devoted to studies of radiation belts. The dynamics of cosmic energetic particles within the Earth's magnetosphere and in interplanetary space was studied with more than 20 satellites, rockets and space probes. by the instruments developed in Slovakia with wide international collaboration. Tracks of cosmic ray particles in solid state detectors have been analysed in nine missions, including the one by Slovakia's first astronaut, Colonel Ivan Bella.

In life sciences, the first experiments went ahead on Cosmos 605 and 690 in 1973 and 1974, respectively. The effects of specific space conditions on animals were studied. The studies were completed on 10 recoverable satellites in the framework of the former InterKosmos programme. The effects of micro-gravity on astronauts were studied on nine flights of satellites, Soyuz-Salyut and Soyuz Mir. The levels of hormones, analysis of plasma and stress tests have been analysed.

In 1999, the first astronaut of Slovakia, Ivan Bella, on Soyuz TN-29 Mir mission performed several experiments in space medicine and biological studies. Research in life sciences is continuing at present.

In the field of remote sensing in a characterized period using satellite data in the landscape assessment and its change mapping in the context of the European projects CORINE Land Cover 1990 dominated. Other activities by using satellite data were also important, control of area based subsidies in agriculture, crop yield forecasting and monitoring of forest health condition in Slovakia. Recently a new important activity namely material research in space has been entered on in Slovakia. Industrially oriented materials research in micro-gravity conditions is focused on measurements of thermophysical properties and solidification behaviour of new alloys for high temperature applications. The results of micro-gravity experiments are used for numerical modelling and optimization of technological processes Thank you for your kind attention.

The CHAIRMAN I thank the distinguished representative of Slovakia, the Vice-President of the Slovak Academy of Sciences, Mr. Lapin.

Now the next speaker on my list is the distinguished representative of Switzerland.

Mr. T. GREMINGER (Switzerland) (*interpretation from French*) Thank you Mr. Chairman. Switzerland is deeply moved to be present here on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the first manned space flight. That first flight, carried out by Yuri Gagarin in April of 1961, launched a new era in the history of humanity, an era of discovery and exploration that led to technological breakthroughs without which we would not be what we are today. Indeed, space technologies have become essential tools for development and industrialization. Access to these technologies for all States must be encouraged and their use must be promoted through international cooperation.

In this regard, the UN Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space has an essential and unique role to play. This Committee is also marking its own fiftieth anniversary this year and we wish it fruitful decades to come. Already in its very first years the Committee successfully laid the foundations of international space law by developing, in 1967, the United Nations Treaty on Outer Space but today the context has changed. The space environment has become crowded and the number of actors in the space arena has multiplied.

We are entering a new era and the existing legal framework has reached its limits, it must be supplemented and adapted to the new reality. The Committee and its subsidiary bodies are working towards that objective. Switzerland welcomes in particular the work undertaken with the objective of making space activities sustainable in the long term. Furthermore, work designed to develop confidence building measures and transparency for space activities is also essential. In this regard, my delegation welcomes the fact that the General Assembly has decided to establish an intergovernmental group of experts to study such measures.

Mr. Chairman, outer space is a common asset shared by all humanity, one from which humanity benefits greatly therefore the risks threatening its continued use should be known to the public at large but they are not known to the public or to decision makers, a lot of time it is up to us, State representatives gathered here and other intergovernmental organizations to raise this awareness, to make sure that measures are taken to avoid new accidents in space and to put controls on the growing population of space debris. Nations, all of them no matter what their level of development, must work together to ensure a future for outer space. In this regard, we welcome this event and the adoption of the resolution that you read out this morning, Mr. Chairman. We hope that this resolution as well as the commemorative events organized here in Vienna will find an echo in New York at the time of the next session of the UN General Assembly, as well as in the media.

In general, Switzerland is of the opinion that this Committee must continue its efforts to promote communication and dialogue with other fora working on related issues as it has already done with regard to the Commission on Sustainable Development. Switzerland, itself, is represented in the Global Sustainability Group and is involved in the preparatory work for the next United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development to be held in Brazil in 2012.

Mr. Chairman, even though Switzerland is a young member of this Committee we did ratify, at the end of the 1970s, four out of five United Nations treaties and conventions on outer space. Since the very first space activities we focused on international collaboration. In 1975, Switzerland was one of the founding members of the European Space Agency (ESA). Since then, Switzerland has actively contributed to the work of ESA and has developed national competencies in particular in the area of launch vehicles, telecommunications, remote observation of the Earth and space science. The Swiss astronaut, Claude Nicollier, was chosen by ESA in 1978 to take part in four missions of the NASA Space Shuttle. Today, Switzerland is participating in such programmes as Galileo, GMES, SSA and the International Space Station. Its research institutions have recently designed two pico-satellites which is a new phase in this work for our country.

Mr. Chairman, a Swiss stand has been organized at the exhibition to be found in the Rotunda of the Vienna International Centre. It demonstrates Swiss experience such as the solar sail deployed on the Moon by the Apollo 11 mission or the core of the AMS-2 detector recently set up on the International Space Station. Furthermore Swiss astronaut, Claude Nicollier, will take part tomorrow evening in the Round Table discussion organized jointly by the Office for Outer Space Affairs and the city of Vienna and, to honour our reputation worldwide, copies of chocolate bars that were taken into space will also be demonstrated on the Swiss stand as well as form part of the space menu in the Cafeteria.

To conclude, let me warmly thank the entire team of the Office for Outer Space Affairs for having organized these commemorative events and we wish you every success and great visibility to this process. Thank you very much Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN (*interpretation from French*) I thank you, your Excellency, for your statement.

(*continued in English*) I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of Mexico.

Mr. A. DÍAZ Y PÉREZ DUARTE (Mexico) (*interpretation from Spanish*) Mr. Chairman. For me it is a pleasure to congratulate you on behalf of the Mexican delegation on assuming the Presidency of this celebratory session to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and the fiftieth anniversary of the first manned space flight. The Mexican delegation welcomes and commends you on the occasion of these anniversaries and for what they signify for the well being of humanity.

Before going on to the substantive part of my statement let me, on behalf of Mexico, express our condolences and solidarity to the peoples and governments of Brazil, New Zealand, Japan, United States and other countries that have suffered human losses and great material damage as a result of recent natural disasters that struck their territories. These disasters only emphasize the need for us to use space technologies for managing natural phenomena.

Mr. Chairman, distinguished delegates. The Government of Mexico is celebrating with the international community represented here the first 50 years in the existence of COPUOS and the fiftieth anniversary of manned space flights. The high level of maturity reached by this Committee, supported in its work by OOSA, can be seen through the various accomplishments and achievements that we have witnessed over the last 50 years. The Committee was established by the UN General Assembly and, throughout the years, it has become considerably expanded and broadened its focus and its objectives and has become a focus of multilateral cooperation. Without any doubt the various tasks performed by COPUOS have made a substantial contribution to defining the course for the international community in the area of space exploration and the peaceful uses of outer space.

Applications of space technology have multiplied in recent decades owing to the great advances in science. Therefore, international cooperation is fundamental to promote and stimulate research, development and innovation in space science and technology throughout the world. Space technology and science improves the prosperity of our societies and the development and the better understanding among nations. The joint use and deployment of space science and technology will bring untold benefits in such areas as health, food, education, telecommunications and satellite broadband services,

environmental work, science, mitigation of natural disasters and rehabilitation in the post-disaster period.

Mr. Chairman. Mexico has tried to live up to its commitments in the field of space exploration based on the resolutions of the General Assembly, implementing the recommendations of the Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, UNISPACE III. It has contributed to the work of COPUOS, supported the Regional Centre for Space Education and Science for Latin America and the Caribbean and the Space Conference of the Americas, currently it performs the function of Pro Tempore Secretariat of this conference. The Government of Mexico is thankful to Ecuador for its support and for the international group of experts.

We believe that knowledge should be shared as a point of departure by all countries in their work in outer space otherwise we risk duplication and dispersion of resources. All efforts designed to promote cooperation within COPUOS on various issues pertaining to the use of outer space are essential and we are inclined to support the Committee at its new stage of innovation and improved cooperation. Mexico focuses on implementing resolutions on the prevention of the arms race in outer space, transparency and confidence building measures in space activities and international cooperation for the use of outer space for peaceful purposes which are adopted every year by the UN General Assembly and invite all States to devise new strategies in full conformity with the objectives of COPUOS.

Recently, Mexico demonstrated the importance it gives to strengthening innovation and multilateralism. The results achieved by the summit on climate change in Cancun at the Conference of the Parties 16, showed the high level of commitment of our country to that cause. For Mexico, it is fundamental to strengthen international cooperation in the area of space technologies and applications. Furthermore, Mexico considers the programme of international research involving the majority of States as essential to incorporating all the various space technologies and applications in the service of sustainable development for developing countries. We are convinced that the work of this fifty-fourth session of the Committee will be productive with the effective support and participation of States and organizations that have the status of permanent observers at the Committee. They will lay the foundations for a revitalization of multilateralism within this Committee and its subcommittees.

To conclude, my delegation would like to express its most sincere gratitude for the work carried out by COPUOS during its 50 successful years of existence and state that the Government of Mexico will continue cooperating with the Committee now through a specialized national entity that we have, the Mexican Space Agency, which will promote the peaceful uses of outer space for the benefit of all humankind. Thank you very much.

The CHAIRMAN Thank you, distinguished representative of Mexico for your statement. I once again kindly ask delegates to brief their statements. We ask the translators to stay a little bit longer, it is already 6 p.m. and I ask for your permission to continue for a short period of time.

The next speaker on my list is the distinguished representative of the Philippines.

Mr. C. MANANGAN (Philippines) Mr. Chairman, distinguished colleagues, I would like to express my greetings and appreciation on your chairmanship of the fifty-fourth session of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and assure you and the members of your bureau of our full support for this session. I would also like to take this opportunity to express my delegation's appreciation to Dr. Othman, Director of the Office for Outer Space Affairs, as well as the hard-working staff of the Office for Outer Space Affairs for the preparations required for this meeting.

Mr. Chairman, the year 2011 marks the fiftieth anniversary of the first period of the sessions of COPUOS and the fiftieth anniversary of human space flight. The Philippines joins the world community in expressing its greetings on the fiftieth anniversary of COPUOS and expresses its deep appreciation for the work that COPUOS and its two subcommittees have done in order to promote international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space.

The Philippines is a signatory to the 1967 Outer Space Treaty, the 1968 Agreement on the Rescue of Astronauts, the 1972 Convention on International Liability for Damage caused by Space Objects and is among the few States that has ratified the Moon Treaty. Accordingly, the Philippines believes that COPUOS should continue to enhance international cooperation in space activities, promote all aspects of the peaceful utilization of outer space and improve the ongoing and future activities in this area with a view to contribute to both global, social and economic prosperity and sustainable development particularly for developing countries and to avoid any measures that

would limit access to space by nations with emerging space capabilities.

In closing, the Philippines also believes that more effort should be devoted to strengthen the strategy for the use of space technology in the area of disaster risk reduction and management. Collaboration and effective use of space-based information should be enhanced providing better opportunities for developing countries to access space-based information especially during occurrences of natural disasters. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN I thank the distinguished representative of the Philippines for his statement.

The next speaker on my list is the distinguished representative of Poland.

Mr. M. WIKINSKI (Poland) Thank you. Mr. Chairman, distinguished delegates. On behalf of the Polish delegation I express my congratulations to the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space for organization of this high level segment of the COPUOS session commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of Yuri Gagarin's space flight.

The first human space flight was not only the cornerstone mission of human _____(?) points the direction into space but it was as well the new perspective for bilateral and multilateral relations of all countries. Since then, not only technological competition but also political cooperation with respect to human space flight became the nature of space exploration. Hundreds of astronauts from dozens of countries followed Gagarin to outer space among them the Polish cosmonaut, Mirosław Hermaszewski, visited the Salyut space station in 1978. Now, since the last decade, the International Space Station where human beings are continuously present in outer space is the sign of this political as well as a technological international cooperation, one of the results of the Yuri Gagarin _____(?) space flight.

The international cooperation in space research and exploration was the privilege for many countries. One of them was Poland, one of the founders of the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. Poland has a long tradition of participation in space activities dating back to the mid-60s when Poland joined the Interkosmos programme and involvement in space activity is perceived as a great challenge. Since then space instrumentation has become a Polish specialty and more than 70 Polish-built instruments have been launched into space.

Next, the European Space Agency became a major partner of Polish space activities in the early 90s. Our institutes, under the agreement on cooperation signature between ESA and the Government of the Republic of Poland, contributed to several ESA exploratory missions. Polish instruments _____(?) of ESA Huygens probe and are presently on the way to the comet on the Rosetta mission. The ground _____(?) transfer to satellite positioning system _____(?) time difference observatories over the world. However, our space technology is still far from the state of _____(?). Nevertheless the European space exploration programme offering cross-cultural cooperation within the framework of missions. We also see the possibilities to contribute to this common activity as a recognized partner of European space policy of the European Union.

I would like to thank the distinguished delegations and you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for your attention.

The CHAIRMAN I thank the distinguished representative of Poland for his statement.

The next speaker on my list is the distinguished representative of Indonesia.

Mr. T. DJAMALUDDIN (Indonesia) Thank you Mr. Chairman. Fifty years ago when Yuri Gagarin first orbited the Earth which embarked on a new chapter of human endeavour in outer space and when UNCOPUOS first met in 1961 space was still a distant and unknown zone. The increase of potential and real benefits offered by space technology was still vague for many countries which had not yet developed. In this respect, we welcome the Declaration on the fiftieth anniversary of human space flight and the fiftieth anniversary of COPUOS adopted unanimously this morning. This Declaration reaffirms our common endeavour to use space science and technology as well as the applications to preserve planet Earth and its space environment for our future generations.

As the largest archipelagic country in the world consisting of thousands of islands, Indonesia _____(?). In the mid-70s, Indonesia became the first developing country to operate its own domestic satellite system, Palapa. The programme was started in February 1975, when the government of Indonesia awarded the contract for two satellites to Boeing. The system has fulfilled the communication needs of Indonesia which keeps increasing day by day. Many years of operation has shown that satellite technology is the best solution for improving telecommunications in Indonesia. Indonesia has consistently taken the steps

necessary to develop its existing geostationary satellite system for multiple services. Now the services have been extended to meet the requirement of the region as well as the original objectives. Now the role of space technology and its _____(?) have been proven in various fields and in the daily life of modern society such as telecommunications, navigation, management of natural resources, _____(?) and disaster mitigation which _____(?) life globally and contribute to the higher standard of human life. While most countries have differing and unequal capacities in developing space technology, the benefits of this technology have provided concrete results for most countries and their people. The dissemination of space technology amongst countries _____(?) from the roles that UNCOPUOS has played, the rapid development of space technology, the various actors involved in space activities and the dependence of numerous aspects of life on technology all bring about the necessity for _____(?) to hinder conflicts in the future and guarantee the peaceful uses of outer space. _____(?) the Earth we live on, the _____(?) of outer space also needs a global response to guarantee its sustainability.

As a reflection of Indonesia's commitment we join in participating in the exhibition by displaying technological advantages _____(?) disaster monitoring and other technology. Indonesia will also host the 2011 Asia/Pacific round of the Manfred Lachs Space Law Moot Court from 3-5 June 2011, an International Conference on the Law of Outer Space from 6-7 June 2011 in cooperation with the International Institute of Space Law. Indonesia is honoured to welcome the distinguished delegates to the Indonesian exhibition and invites member States to participate in the conference in Jakarta.

During the past 50 years, UNCOPUOS and its member countries have contributed to much progress. As a member of COPUOS since 1973, Indonesia hopes to see more breakthroughs in our common endeavours. We believe in the _____(?) of willingness of all member countries to contribute to the development of space technology through their interaction and cooperation with other members and international organizations. Indonesia hopes that such cooperation could be strengthened based on respect, equal partnership and mutual benefit. Therefore, the potential and benefit of space technologies and activities could contribute to the development as far as to the enhancement of mankind's quality of life. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN I thank the distinguished representative of Indonesia for his statement.

I would now like to give the floor to the distinguished representative of South Africa.

Mr. X. MABHONGO (South Africa) Thank you Mr. Chairman. Distinguished delegates. It is significant that we have gathered here today to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the establishment of UNCOPOUS. UNCOPOUS has had notable achievements and played a practical role in promoting the peaceful uses of outer space. The Committee has assisted with the development of international space law and the promotion of international cooperation on space matters.

Today we also celebrate 50 years since the Russian cosmonaut, Yuri Gagarin, made history when he became the first person to be lifted into space. His flight inspired many generations and laid the basis for much further development of space exploration.

Mr. Chairperson. We take cognizance of the important role that space technology can play in socio-economic development. Space technology contributes to the upliftment of the human condition through its use in areas such as water management, environment conservation, land use and management, the development of new medicines as well as better and improved communications. South Africa therefore places great importance to the development of space technology. South Africa wishes to emphasize the importance of the long-term sustainability of the human use of outer space. We are convinced that the current generation has a responsibility to ensure that future generations also reap benefits from the peaceful uses of outer space. Furthermore we believe that the principle of equity in the exploitation of outer space should ensure that all countries, big and small, benefit from the peaceful uses of outer space.

South Africa has been an active participant in the exploration of space since the dawn of the space age, wherein from the 1950s to the 1970s satellites were tracked to determine the effects of the upper atmosphere on their orbits. Lunar and interplanetary orbits were supported by the tracking station at Hartebeesthoek in South Africa. The station received images of the planet Mars taken by the Mariner IV spacecraft, the first images of Mars and another planet to be received on Earth. Amongst other achievements, in 1999 we launched our first satellite called SunSat as an experiment for remote sensing applications. South Africa's second satellite, Sumbandilsat, was launched in September 2009 in Kazakhstan, on a Soyuz rocket.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairperson, it is also fitting that in the year of this fiftieth anniversary of

human space flight and the establishment of COPUOS, South Africa will host the 62nd International Astronautical Congress in Cape Town in October .This is the first time that the IAC will be held on African soil. We look forward to welcoming you to South Africa to participate in this historic event. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN I thank Your Excellency for your statement.

I would like now to the give the floor to the distinguished representative of Morocco.

Mr. O. ZNIBER (Morocco) (*interpretation from French*) Thank you Chairman. It is an honour and a pleasure for me to speak at this commemorative session marking 50 years of achievement and progress in the field of the peaceful uses of outer space which have had a profound impact on all sectors of our life and substantially contributed to the socio-economic development of our planet. We welcome these achievements and also note that COPUOS is called upon more than ever to play a central role especially given that the conditions that prevailed 50 years ago at the time the Committee was created have changed radically and new types of players have now come to the fore with motivations and objectives which are very different from those pursued by States and they have new horizons which are perpetually changing. In this context, our Committee faces new challenges if it is to respond effectively to these concerns and continue its endeavours to ensure that the principles which have guided its action for 50 years may continue to foster international cooperation and provide developing countries with the requisite support to encourage them to initiate their space activities and set up the institutions and bodies which will carry forward those activities.

Morocco, aware of the importance and fundamental role of space technologies, more than 20 years ago embarked upon a purposeful, bold policy to ensure that these technologies become a strategic tool in its development. This approach is geared to three priority areas, firstly the creation of an appropriate framework to afford the entire user community easy and efficient access to space technologies. Many institutions were set up for this purpose including the Royal Centre for Remote Sensing in order to establish the mechanisms and tools required for operational exploitation of space technologies. The second is that of training and R&D the aim of which is to bolster, in an endearing manner, national capacity and skills in order to make appropriate use of the benefits of space. In addition to a continuous training programme which this Centre has been conducting for more than 50 years and which has made it possible to train more than 1700 personnel from various ministerial departments and private organizations, several universities are proposing on their curricula training and research programmes dedicated to space science and technology. Regional and international cooperation is the third focus of this strategy in order to bolster peaceful uses of space, to help States in the region to develop their space capacity and to contribute to attainment of the Millennium Development Goals while promoting an interregional dialogue on space issues. In this regard, we should recall that ever since 1998 Morocco has hosted the African Regional Centre for Space Science and Technology Education in the French language and it has contributed to the training of many African personnel in the fields of Earth observation satellite telecommunications and space meteorology. We take advantage of this opportunity to hail the efforts and achievements of the UN Programme on Space Applications to benefit developing countries.

Mr. Chairman, sustainable development of space activities cannot be achieved without a strengthening of cooperation mechanisms and consolidation of the principles and values which were at the origin of the creation of our Committee and which have guided its activities for 50 years in order to bring about the peaceful uses of outer space and the broadest possible participation of all countries in space activities and the benefits stemming from them. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN (*interpretation from French*) Thank you for your statement.

The next speaker on my list is the distinguished representative of Spain.

Ms. C. BUJÁN FREIRE (Spain) (*interpretation from Spanish*) Thank you Chairman, distinguished delegates. In orbiting the Earth I saw how beautiful our planet is, let us safeguard this beauty and not destroy it. These were the words which Yuri Gagarin voiced 50 years ago when he became the first man to cross the final frontier, the frontier of outer space. The select few who have had the privilege of following Gagarin including the Spaniard Pedro Duque and you yourself Chairman can report on the sensation of infinity which space creates. However, it is increasingly obvious that use of outer space is a finite and extremely vulnerable natural resource which we must share and protect zealously. Therefore Spain welcomes the celebration this year of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space because COPUOS has

been, is and must continue to remain, the international community's forum for all outer space related issues.

We would also like to take advantage of this opportunity to congratulate you for the consultations which were undertaken so that we could adopt the Declaration this morning and also thank Ms. Mazlan Othman the Director of OOSA and all her team for the intensive work which has gone into preparing for these commemorative events.

Mr. Chairman, distinguished delegates. Fifty years ago COPUOS was created with the purpose of boosting international cooperation for the peaceful use of outer space to benefit humanity. One can say with pride that COPUOS is successfully discharging the mission entrusted to it. This Committee can take pride in having spawned the treaties and declarations which have established the fundamental principles of international space law. Spain is Party to the first four treaties governing the use and exploration of outer space. The treaties which constitute the legal framework without which it would not have been possible to guarantee and safeguard the peaceful use of outer space to benefit all humanity but the work COPUOS is far from being concluded. Indeed, present and future challenges may prove to be even greater than the ones already overcome. COPUOS must continue producing ways and means which will enable competitive use of outer space while alleviating problems stemming from over exploitation.

The adoption in recent years of the guidelines for the reduction of space debris as well as the safety framework for applications of nuclear energy sources in outer space, endorsed in the respective resolutions of the General Assembly, are clear examples of the intensive and valuable work of COPUOS. With initiatives such as these the Committee is continuing resolutely to contributing to ensuring that humanity may enjoy the countless benefits provided by the use of space in conditions of equality, freedom and security for all. The work of COPUOS is not confined to the drafting of legal and technical standards or guidelines in order to manage the peaceful use of outer space COPOUS also has acted as a prime mover behind initiatives for the use of outer space to benefit all humanity. The United Nations Platform for Space-based Information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response, SPIDER, has already displayed the enormous potential that proper use of space technologies may entail in order to tackle, in a coordinated fashion, the tragedies which periodically inflict our planet.

Ever since 1980 Spain has worked intensively with this Committee. There is nothing more natural for Spain than to consider the challenge of outer space as the common challenge for all mankind. Indeed, outer space is the choice place for international cooperation represented in its most important symbol, the International Space Station. Therefore, we congratulate all of you present here on the adoption this morning of the fiftieth anniversary Declaration of the first manned space flight and the fiftieth anniversary of COPUOS. Thank you for the work you perform.

The CHAIRMAN I thank the distinguished representative of Spain for your statement.

The next speaker on my list is the distinguished representative of Malaysia.

Mr. D. IKRAM BIN YAAKOB (Malaysia) Thank you Mr. Chairman. I will follow your wise counsel to give a short statement, as short as possible, so I hope the interpreter will bear with me because I have cut most of my speech and some of the statement I will deliver is going to be an off the cuff statement.

Mr. Chairman, distinguished delegates. It is indeed an honour for our delegation to be here today to commemorate and celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the first session of the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS) and the fiftieth anniversary of human space flight.

Mr. Chairman, being a developing country we are proud of the progress we have made thus far on our space programme. I must mention that under our astronaut programme, or in Malay term Angkasawan programme, with the cooperation of Roscosmos of the Russian Federation we sent our very first astronaut, Dr. Sheikh Muszaphar Shukor, to the International Space Station on 10 October 2007. During the mission our astronaut, Dr. Sheikh Muszaphar, performed experiments on board the International Space Station relating to the characteristics and growth of liver cancer and leukaemia cells, the crystallization of various proteins and microbes in space. He also brought with him to space nine food products to experiment the effect of micro-gravity on human sensory perceptions. For those who are eager to know the results of these experiments, all of you are most welcome to visit the Malaysian booth at the Rotunda in the afternoon of Friday the third because one of the nine food products namely, beef rendang, will be made available at our booth. I must also mention our astronaut, Dr. Muszaphar, will also be there if there are questions or clarifications that need to be asked of him.

The importance of our Angkasawan programme, or astronaut programme, is to indicate that there is a place for developing countries to join the more advanced countries even in a manned space programme and of course my country, Malaysia, hopes that we could send our second, third or fourth in the future so that we continue to prove that, even as a developing country, we are able to participate in this programme if the opportunities are given to us.

Mr. Chairman, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen. Malaysia has been an active member of COPUOS and this is reflected by the number of United Nations activities to space that we have hosted and I must also highlight that Malaysia, represented by none other than Dr. Mazlan Othman, chaired the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee of COPUOS in 2007. Presently our space activities include collaboration with Japan in micro-gravity and parabolic flight experiments, we have been sending protein samples to the International Space Station since 2008 and will continue to do so through 2012. Malaysia is working with the Asia-Pacific Regional Space Agency Forum in the STAR development programme, the International Space Weather Initiative and the Mars500 programme, hosted by the Russian Federation.

Malaysia will continue to do our utmost to contribute to the development of space science and technology with an emphasis on technology innovation to fulfil the mission _____(?) development programme and, in this regard, we renew our commitment to COPUOS and will continue our active participation in the activities of COPUOS especially in the implementation of the recommendations of the Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration of Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.

In conclusion, let me congratulate you on your able chairmanship, for your patience and also to Dr. Mazlan Othman and her team for the excellent arrangements for this commemorative segment and for the international exhibition on the fiftieth anniversary of human space flight which will take place throughout the whole month of June. I thank you for your attention.

The CHAIRMAN Thank you, Excellency, for your short and comprehensive speech.

Now, the last speaker on my list is the distinguished representative of Nigeria.

Mr. A. ABIODUN (Nigeria) Thank you very much Mr. Chairman for giving my delegation the opportunity to address the distinguished delegates at this time. For me personally, and for Nigeria also, it is a great honour to address you and to address every delegate in this room on this occasion.

When I was coming here for this fiftieth celebration the first question I asked myself was, how many people would know of COPUOS 50 years ago that would be in this room today and I do not think we have anybody here that was then present when resolution 1472 was passed in 1959 at the General Assembly. As you look back towards that resolution what did it say? It said that COPUOS shall review, as appropriate, the area of international cooperation. COPUOS shall study practical and feasible means for devising programmes in the peaceful use of outer space and COPUOS shall provide encouragement for national research programmes for the study of outer space environment. The question I ask myself, has COPUOS done this? Let us look back and see what COPUOS has done.

As we listened this morning to the distinguished astronaut from Russia when he quoted what Yuri Gagarin said about how he viewed the Earth and how all of us need to cooperate. I remember very well myself when I first joined the United Nations in 1977 the thing that _____(?) most in my mind was the superpower play between Russia, or let me say Soviet Union at that time, and the United States. We would sit in the room and the United States would say something, Soviet Union would say no, and vice-versa and I said ‘when are we going to get anything done here?’ The most beautiful thing about COPUOS is the way it does its business and that is by consensus. I think that everything we have done in the past 50 years became possible as a result of that one word, consensus. When you look at consensus here, what has it yielded us? It has yielded many things.

One of the first decisions COPUOS took, if all of you remember, was to organize the first UNISPACE in 1968 and everything COPUOS has been doing ever since always came from these UNISPACE conferences. In 1968, UNISPACE I as I call it and, for those of you who may not know, the UN Space Applications Programme came out of UNISPACE I. Then UNISPACE II, or UNISPACE 82, in 1982, again as my _____(?) the Space Applications Programme was strengthened. Now we come to UNISPACE III and now the whole Office for Outer Space Affairs and the programme became greater strengthened with member States giving greater authority and mandate to the Office to accomplish greater things for member States.

What are those things that have been accomplished and I will look at them individually as I said before. I look at Sierra Leone in 1968 there moved a motion to establish the UN Space Applications Programme. I myself came to this UN system in 1977 and led the programme for a number of years. Then UNISPACE 82 came and we proposed to COPUOS, and COPUOS agreed, that we should establish regional centres and the regional centres, with your support, are today in operation. Then we have UN SPIDER, my country is a host to one of the regional support offices, my country, Nigeria, is also a host to one of the regional centres on space education. Then COPUOS again approved at the end of 1999 UNISPACE III, the UN Charter on Management of Disasters and in 2004 and 2005, through Nigeria's _____(?) we were able to contribute to the provision of information and _____(?) data for the tsunami in south-east Asia and for hurricane Katrina in the United States.

Then COPUOS left a number of issues in place for us to manage the outer space environment and the biggest of them all is the space treaty and from the space treaty have come many other legal instruments that have helped us. In helping my own country I pick the remote sensing principles because without that principle our satellite today in space would have been lost as a result of space junk and we also owe that to space debris mitigation. As we now come out of UNISPACE III under Brachet and through the work I started and Brachet took over and you took over, today we are now having the Working Group on Sustainability of Space Activities in the Outer Space Environment.

Basically, Mr. Chairman, when you look at this, you look at nuclear power sources in outer space, you look at near-Earth objects in outer space and their mitigation, COPUOS can really pat itself on the back and say it has indeed lived up to the mandate the General Assembly granted it in 1959.

As we look to the future my own message mostly is for us in Africa and that is simply that COPUOS is for the benefit of all us and we have a lot to gain as well as a lot to contribute in all of these issues that I have addressed but to do that we need to strengthen our own internal capacity at each national level. It is only through that that we are going to be able to contribute to some of these things. Personally, I want to thank the Office for getting through COPUOS Human Space Technology Initiative which I hope many of the developing countries, including those in Africa, will take advantage of.

Mr. Chairman, my delegation believes that COPUOS is an indispensable body for the United Nations and for the global community. With that belief, we recommit ourselves to its goals and we shall continue to support it in all areas and one of those areas that it has supported us in Africa today is the establishment of the African Leadership Conference which came out of _____(?) a COPUOS-sponsored meeting in South Africa in 1996. There are many other things like that that came out of COPUOS and that is Africa Resource Environment Management System which is an initiative of Nigeria, South Africa, Algeria and Kenya and I invite other member States in the region to participate. With all of this, we believe that COPUOS has been tremendous and supportive of what we are doing and we thank the Office, we thank you for the Declaration you drafted and was adopted this morning and we congratulate you and we congratulate all member States as well as observers in this Committee. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN I thank the distinguished representative of Nigeria for your statement, Mr. Abiodun, former expert on space applications and very valuable expert within the UN. Thank you very much.

I would like to warmly thank you all for your addresses on the occasion of the commemorative segment.

Distinguished delegates, before I declare closed the afternoon part of the commemorative segment, I would like to inform you about the order of our work tomorrow morning.

We will meet promptly at 10 a.m. in Conference Room M1 to begin the regular session of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space in accordance with the provisional agenda contained in A/AC.105/L.280. We will consider item 2, adoption of the agenda; item 3, statement by the Chair; and we will begin our consideration of item 4, general exchange of views.

Are there any questions or comments on this proposed schedule? I see none.

I would now like to invite delegations to the official opening of the international exhibition on human space flight in the Rotunda of the Vienna International Centre. All delegations are cordially invited to take part in the official opening. The opening ceremony will be followed by a reception hosted by the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs in the

Mozart Room of the restaurant of the Vienna International Centre. All are welcome.

I hereby declare closed the commemorative segment of the fifty-fourth session of the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and look forward to meeting you at 10 a.m. tomorrow morning at the regular session of the Committee.

The meeting closed at 6.42 p.m.